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A STRAIGHT ROAD TO PEACE

The Nation

VOL. XXII, No. 13.  
Registered as a Newspaper.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1917.

[PRICE 6D.  
Postage: U.K. 3d.; Abroad 1d.]

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Events of the Week.

LORD MILNER and Lord Robert Cecil have gone to Paris on a mission whose object is not stated, though it is thought to be connected with fresh German proposals of peace. If this is true, we hope that whatever is done will be done as openly as possible. The world desires peace. But it must be a peace of true and general settlement, appeasement, and satisfaction. Let the nations bring a common offering to the altar. We possess a store of hostages, rich enough to outweigh the more showy but less substantial German gains. We, therefore, bear a solemn trust. Let us be worthy of it. The country has saved herself by her exertions, nobly sustained through a prolonged period of terrible trial. Now, with America and her Allies, she has it again in her power to save Europe by an example of firmness and conciliation.

[Since this was written we learn the momentous news that Germany has offered Russia, and through her the Allies, a general peace based on the Russian formula of no annexations and no indemnities.]

A NEUTRAL Legation in Washington has circulated among the diplomatic corps a remarkable version of what are now said to be Germany's peace terms. A document originating in this way is presumably much more likely to reflect the real mind of the German Government than a mere journalistic "feeler." The leading idea of this set of terms is clearly to give to France and Great Britain what each is supposed to want most, even at the cost of direct loss to the German Empire, while providing for certain gains at Russia's expense. The terms are as follows: (1) A *plébiscite* for Alsace-Lorraine; (2) Purchase-money paid by Britain for Germany's African colonies to serve as a restoration fund for Belgium and other occupied territories; (3) Poland under Austrian, Courland and Lithuania under German suzerainty, to

form independent States; (4) Restoration with their "original boundaries" of Roumania, Serbia, and Montenegro; Serbia to have access to the sea: Turkey to remain intact; (5) Disarmament, freedom of the seas and of commerce, to be left to the Peace Conference. Thus Alsace, subject to a referendum, is offered to France, and the German African colonies to us, subject to purchase. Poland, Courland, and Lithuania gain internal independence, but come within "Mitteleuropa." The territorial *status quo* is proposed for the Balkans and Turkey. The last item appears to ignore Bulgarian claims to Macedonia and her old Dobrudja frontier, and by the "original boundaries of Serbia and Roumania" those of 1912 may be meant.

THESE terms suggest moderation, and a genuine wish to negotiate, but they do not, as they stand, sketch the peace which Liberals desire. The offer of a referendum for Alsace is a great concession. We do not want the African colonies as our *pourboire*, but the offer none the less reveals a friendly, if cynical, state of mind. We should wish to know, before pronouncing on these terms, how far Germany is prepared to go in the fifth chapter (disarmament, freedom of commerce, &c.), which is for us the central issue. It is idle, in any event, to talk of restoring Courland and Lithuania, let alone Poland, to Russia, and equally idle to talk of their independence in their external relations, if the armed peace is resumed in Europe. But are they to be added to Germany's conscript resources of man-power, and to form a closed economic preserve for her trade? The answer to that question depends on the general provisions for disarmament and commercial freedom. The "Austrian solution" for Poland would be a relatively tolerable fate for the Poles; but would it mean, with the other satellite kingdoms, the addition of two million bayonets to the Central Empires? The test of these terms, which go far in the direction of "restoration," and promise something for nationality, is whether they are compatible with "security." Would Germany consent (1) to the dissolution of alliances within a League of Nations, (2) to general disarmament (accepted in the reply to the Pope), and (3) to a most-favored nation clause conceded mutually by all members of the League. Within this framework these terms might be robbed of any potential menace.

THE retirement of Sir John Jellicoe may be taken as the conclusion of a long struggle for an independent and active Naval General Staff. Until now the Staff has only been independent so far as it was inactive. Nothing seems to have been asked of it but to take its inglorious rôle as quietly as possible. Sir John Jellicoe is one of the ablest commanders the British Navy has ever had in all its history. No one was more trusted by the Fleet; no one more respected abroad. As an executant he has never been excelled, and in naval warfare this means much more than in land warfare, for an Admiral taking his fleet into action is responsible not only for strategy, but for tactics. It would have been strange if Sir John Jellicoe had not the defects of his qualities, and it has long been current that it was he who overshadowed the Naval Staff. Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, who succeeds Sir John,

distinguished himself at the Daradanelles, and has recently held the office of Second Sea Lord. The chief importance of the change is the implication that the Naval Staff will at length come to its own. There is much room for its work, and with eleven large cargo ships sunk there is at least one critical problem that calls for action. But it is the way of approach that will tell, and for this reason, much as all must regret the departure of Sir John Jellicoe, we welcome the change.

THERE has been little change in the Western front recently, though the British line has been slightly withdrawn towards the north-east of Ypres. But in Italy the crisis, deferred so long, is clearly at hand. We cannot lightly assume that it will be decided in favor of the enemy. Many times in the Verdun campaign it looked as if all were over. But the enemy has made considerable headway, despite the brilliant little counter-attack which restored Mt. Asolone. The area in which the critical struggle is taking place is that tumbled heap of hill country between the Adige and the Piave; but the main sector is between Asiago and the Piave. The ten miles east of Asiago, again, narrow the situation still further. The Brenta flows through this sector, and, in effect, the present struggle turns on the possession of the Brenta Valley. East of it lies the strong position of Mt. Grappa, upon which hardly any impression has been made. The Germans and Austrians have devoted most of their attention to its flanks, and Asolone on the west, if held, would have turned the position. Any advance up the Brenta must similarly turn the flanks of Mt. Grappa and give the way to the plain.

THE Austro-Germans have struck alternately west and east of the Brenta Valley. They have cleared the northern of the two gorges which opens into it from the west, and the present attack aims at clearing the second, Val Frenzela. The two peaks, Rosso and Bella, seem to be held by the Austrians after a momentary recovery by the Italians, and these are the real guardians of Val Frenzela. If this gorge can be entirely cleared, it is difficult to see how the Brenta Valley can still hold out. But if it gives, Mt. Grappa and its strongly-held supports will fall, and the line of the Piave will be turned. That is how it looks; but the present lines are simply improvised positions, and perhaps, as has been suggested, there may be some line below which will enable the Piave front still to hold out. It is the plains that lure the enemy, and he is making violent efforts to reach them before the real snows of winter choke his communications. He is always well served by the Continental Press, and the reports of great offensives in the west have fulfilled their purpose. The main force at the enemy's disposal is at present looking into the Italian plains.

GENERAL ALLENBY has further improved his position in Palestine, and the latest successes open up some interesting lines of inquiry. We know practically nothing of how Jerusalem was taken. Anyone who attempts to piece together the various reports will discover that Hebron and Bethlehem fell apparently without assault; and yet, after the capture of Jerusalem, the Turks were found only about two miles to the south-east. At this moment the British line seems to run very close to Bethlehem, but it has been pushed out on the Jericho road. Farther north the positions have been further improved by the crossing of the Nahr el Auja and the advance to the north. This movement raises the question of where the Turks mean to stand. Shechem is their present main pivot, but it was thought that a line would be carried to the coast along the Nahr el Auja. We have had no recent evidence of the existence of any large organized body of Turkish troops in Palestine. There were storm companies operating outside Jerusalem before the surrender; but no large army such as Falkenberg must command has been heard of recently, and it seems incredible that he should allow us to seize Acre without offering a heavier opposition than we have experienced since Beersheba fell.

THE publication this week of Mr. Bonar Law's reply to the Trade Union's deputation upon the "Conscription of Wealth" was evidently timed for the discussion in the Labor Conference. His present declaration in favor of a capital levy after the war will carry more weight among men of property by reason of the purely business manner in which the issue was set forth. "My own feeling," he says, "is that it would be better, both for the wealthy and the country, to have this levy of capital, and reduce the burden of the National Debt." His argument was that, in any case, the great bulk of the war costs, present and future, must fall upon wealth, and be drawn by direct, not by indirect, taxation. Before the war direct taxation produced 58 per cent. of the total tax revenue: it was now producing 82 per cent. So far he was justified in holding that "the great cost of the war had been paid by those who had wealth." But, though he gave exact figures for taxation, he forgot to explain how small a proportion of the total cost was derived from taxes, and what a large proportion from extravagantly financed loans, which would at the close of the war leave all the assets of the nation heavily mortgaged to the small class of financiers and other rich men, whose large profits and consequently easy saving were borrowed on such generous terms.

THE popular demand for "Conscription of Wealth" is based chiefly on grounds of justice or "equality" of sacrifice; the feeling that a war which has cost so many young men's lives ought not to be allowed to be a source of profit to older men. Mr. Law, however, argues the matter upon strictly business lines. As the rich must pay, better to pay a large sum at once, and so reduce the drag upon the future. If, as is likely, the aggregate debt after the war amounts to some 7,000 millions, a levy of, say, 12 per cent. upon the average, by a graduated rate, might yield some 2,000 millions, thus bringing down the annual provision for interest and sinking fund within a manageable sum, provided prices and incomes continue to be reckoned on a high monetary level.

THERE will be, of course, loud objections from wealthy people, who would rather pay high annual taxation, with some hope of shifting it upon customers, or, by protection and a lowering of exemption limits, upon the workers, than be forced to hand over a lump of their capital, which would be lost to them beyond recovery. Some economists have urged that it is of no real advantage to the State to take over capital when the alternative of taking the income of the same capital by annual taxation is open to them. Moreover, to take part of the capital will reduce the future yield of incomes derived from capital. This, no doubt, is true, but it does not dispose of the advantage of wiping out at once a large body of the debt, and so saving the interest which would each year have to be met. For the difficulty of collecting an income-tax so frightfully high as would otherwise be required might prove insurmountable. Such taxation would certainly be a stronger deterrent to enterprise and saving in the future than a single emergency levy, such as is contemplated. Mr. Law's speech places the capital levy upon the plane of early practical politics. Let those who denounce it explain their alternative finance.

THE second Australian referendum promises an even larger majority against conscription than the first. Only part of the soldiers' vote has been reckoned, but with 1,072,000 already recorded against and only 889,000 for conscription, the result is certain. Mr. Hughes staked the future of his Government on the issue, and his early resignation is expected. He may advise that Mr. Tudor, the anti-conscription Labor leader, be called on to form an administration, but there are rumors that Labor may ask Mr. Fisher to return to Australia. A General Election seems inevitable, for Labor could not govern against the present Liberal-cum-Hughes majority. The contrast to Canada is curious, but there are two explanations. It was easy in Canada to turn the controversy into a racial issue. Australia, moreover, has raised nearly as many men by voluntary service as she could



have done under any system of conscription which took account of her labor requirements.

M. CAILLAUX made a brilliant defence before the Chamber on Saturday last. It was a fine feat of oratory, and the courageous decision of the orator himself to ask for a suspension of his immunity, in order that he may be vindicated, has won sympathy, and will, we trust, frustrate M. Clemenceau's proposal to send him before a court-martial. He gave a detailed account of his relations with Bolo and the "Bonnet Rouge." The former was introduced to him by the President of the Court of Appeal, and the latter had defended his wife, when her life was at stake. After all, neither Bolo nor the staff of the "Bonnet Rouge" have yet been tried, though the case against the former seems clear. The accusations regarding the visit of M. Caillaux to Rome may have had their origin in the antagonism of the Embassy staff, which wished to boycott the ex-Premier and his wife, and was ordered by M. Briand to call upon them. A social and political feud lies behind this campaign of accusations. The charge of dealings with the Vatican (would that be treasonable, even if it were true?) seems to be disposed of by the categorical denials both of M. Caillaux and of the Vatican itself. M. Caillaux stated that when overtures did reach him he placed himself at once under the direction of the Foreign Office.

THE text of a secret treaty concluded in July, 1916, between Russia and Japan is one of the most important of the Bolshevik disclosures, and it adds a disturbing new fact to our knowledge. The public treaty was a vague pledge of co-operation in the Far East. We suspected that more lay behind it, but it was generally welcomed in this country as a contribution to the solidity of the Entente. It was, in fact, nothing of the kind. It virtually provided for joint military action by Russia and Japan to exclude the influence of other Powers from China. As the "Manchester Guardian" and the "Times" summarize it, it is "directed against the interference of any third Power in the affairs of China," and each of the two Powers was to render the other effective aid in the event of such interference. Thus did Japan and the Tsardom propose to monopolize the Far East for themselves. Japan now stands alone, immensely richer and more formidable than she was in 1914, and she has already extracted from America a recognition of her special relationship to China. We dispute about Germany's suzerainty over the Baltic provinces, and silently allow Japan to acquire a protectorate over China. The war has oddly changed our sense of relative values. The immediate significance of this secret treaty is that it reveals Japan in the act of excluding us, with other Powers, from any say in the destinies of China. That means, in the first place, that the old Anglo-Japanese alliance has ceased to exist, and in the second place it warns us that, at the settlement, China's independence must be based on a general guarantee.

THE first meeting of the representatives of Russia and the Central Powers has been held at Brest-Litovsk. Herr von Kühlmann made a smooth-spoken speech, in the key of Christmas. He asked the Russians not to lose sight of hard facts, but urged negotiation in a spirit of "placable humanity and mutual esteem." The Russians have tabled their proposals, which are a set of unexceptionable principles of general application—referenda to decide the allegiance of the occupied territories, compensation for the devastated districts from a general fund to which all the belligerents will contribute, and a veto on any economic war after war. These are really terms for a general peace, and it is probable that the Bolsheviks mean to ask for pledges on behalf of other unhappy belligerents—e.g., Serbia, and not merely for themselves. If they insist on this, it will go far to acquit them of disloyalty. They have no illusions, however, about their power of resistance, and Trotsky announces that if they are compelled by the economic collapse of Russia to accept unsatisfactory

terms, they will regard the peace as a truce, and will prepare for a further renewal of the conflict. This sounds naive, but may really be very astute, for we imagine that Germany's prime object is to secure a friendly Russia open to German penetration. The manufacture of munitions and the improvement of the Russian defences have been stopped, which means that Russia will in no case fight again. The Bolsheviks have asked the Germans to allow the Minority Socialists to meet them at Stockholm. These personal questions have very properly great weight with them. Why in the name of sanity does our Government delay the release of M. Tchitcherine and the Petroffs? Does it positively wish the Russians to think that there is little to choose between the Germans, who will not grant passports to Haase, Bernstein, and Kautsky, and the English, who intern their own comrades?

THERE are some signs of growing moderation in the Bolshevik conduct of internal Russian affairs. They are now faced by a coalition of Outer Russia (Ukraine, Cossack territories, Caucasus, Siberia) against "Great" Russia! At the same time it is clear that this non-Russian coalition is not counter-revolutionary. General Kaledin is said to have resigned his command in order to allay suspicion, and the dominating factor in the coalition is clearly the Social Revolutionary Party, or at least its Right Wing. Outer Russia is not starving as Central and Northern Russia nearly are, and it controls the chief supplies of grain and coal. The Bolsheviks have now announced that they do not intend to interfere with the Constituent Assembly, but will allow it to meet when half its members (400) reach Petrograd. Close on this number of members is now elected. The Social Revolutionaries have an absolute majority, with the Bolsheviks next, and the Cadets nowhere (12 or 13 seats).

THROUGH the veil of two or three committees and sub-committees appears the hand of Mr. Charles H. Merz, the real author of the scheme launched this week by the Ministry of Reconstruction in regard to bulk electricity supply. Mr. Merz is the "prophet, priest, and king" of the privately-owned schemes of bulk electricity, and the whole of this Government White Paper is a carefully-engineered attack upon municipal electricity undertakings. They are to be swallowed up in a set of sixteen newly-created systems, which Mr. Merz and his associates clearly design to be privately-owned. But, although "private enterprise" is to get the plums, it is not to provide the entire cost of the kitchen. "State assistance in some form may be necessary," says Mr. Merz. The taxpayer will, therefore, provide a portion of the funds with which the new Rockefeller will confiscate his property as ratepayer, and build up a big business that will have to be bought out some day—again at his expense!

THE pretext, of course, is the old one—that "private enterprise" is "keener," and pushes business better than a publicly-owned electrical undertaking. But there is a very curious admission concealed in the appendices to the report. It is that certain municipal electrical undertakings have been able to generate current more cheaply than the bulk companies around them. The explanation is very naive: "The power company which serves a large surrounding area has thus been deprived of business which in the long run would have enabled it so to improve and extend its own undertaking as to bring about a reduction in cost which would have benefited the whole of the consumers in the area." (Appendix B, p. 24.) In other words, the extra "keenness" of the privately-owned company proves to be a myth, unless it can force the ratepayers of the big cities to hand over the profitable undertakings they have built up. We pointed out the other day the effect of the Board of Trade's new régime on the municipal tramways; it is evident that an even more daring campaign is to be directed against the municipal electricity undertakings under the guise of "industrial efficiency," "conservation of coal resources," and other fine names. Before it is successful there will be a big fight.

## Politics and Affairs.

### A STRAIGHT ROAD TO PEACE.

*"The British troops in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve send to their American comrades a message of greeting, and of hope that through the achievement of their common purpose, the law of force may yield to the force of law, and peace and goodwill reign at length on earth."*

—GENERAL ALLENBY.

THE speeches of the Prime Minister and of Lord Robert Cecil in last week's debate on war-aims deserve careful analysis. They are remarkable not in themselves only, but in the circumstances of their delivery. Up to the point of Lord Robert Cecil's intervention, the discussion had gone strongly against the Government. Many speeches of great weight had been delivered, criticizing their silence, and demanding that it should cease. There had been only one strongly supporting utterance, and that from a member of extreme views and no great ability. The centre of criticism was Sir Edward Carson. From all quarters came a demand for the repudiation of his endorsement of the Franco-Russian scheme of annexation, his rejection of the League of Nations, and his defence of the policy of economic exclusion. The replies to this attack are of great moment. They were given by three Ministers (Mr. Balfour, Lord Robert Cecil, and the Prime Minister), and they contain, or imply, a statement of the conditions of peace and of accompanying guarantees, from which no retreat can be made. What is this inchoate Treaty? We summarize it as follows:—

#### I.—*Negative Assurances.*

(a) The British Government had no responsibility for the Franco-Russian plan of annexation up to the Left Bank of the Rhine.—(*Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. Balfour.*)

(b) No member of the Government was in favor of an economic war after war.—(*Lord Robert Cecil.*)

(c) The plan of annexing Constantinople to Russia had lapsed.—(*The Prime Minister.*)

#### II.—*Positive Conditions.*

(a) A "main object" must be the establishment of a universal League of Nations. In the absence of such a peace-aim Lord Robert Cecil could not remain a member of the Government.—(*Lord Robert Cecil.*)

(b) Germany must restore the national territory she has conquered or occupied, and make reparation for the damage she has done, with the qualification that Russia, having entered into separate negotiations, must look after herself.—(*The Prime Minister.*)

(c) The future of Mesopotamia, Palestine, Armenia, and the German Colonies must be left to the Peace Congress, subject again to the condition that the first three territories shall not be restored to the Turks.—(*The Prime Minister.*)

#### III.—*Guarantees.*

(a) *Moral.* The terms of Peace must be so equitable that the nations will not want to disturb them. A good peace can best be negotiated with a democratic German Government.

(b) *Material.* There must be a destruction of the Prussian military power—i.e., a crushing victory by land.—(*The Prime Minister.*)

Now there are three obvious reflections to be made on Mr. George's sketch of the terms of peace. It is not, of course, complete. It is a British, not an Allied, proposal, and it omits from its acceptance of a League of Nations the vital corollary of Disarmament. But it is not an immoderate offer. Though it seems a grave

mistake even to suggest, with Lord Robert Cecil, that if the peace itself proved to be of a stable character, Germany should at first be admitted to less than her fair share of the world's supply of raw materials after the war, we do not suppose that this condition would be pressed. No annexations of German territory are proposed, and we may even conceive Mr. George's plan to be a general submission of territorial questions to the Conference. It is also a binding utterance. If this rough draft of a Treaty were accepted by Germany, and the country endorsed Mr. George's policy, it could not be expanded or reduced until it had been laid before the Conference and submitted to the chaffering of the Powers. Presumably, the Prime Minister thinks that the country would, in the main, approve it. We agree. Furthermore, he must consider that such a peace satisfies one of the moral guarantees—namely, that the negotiating Powers would not seek to disturb an arrangement clearly equitable in itself. In other words, he believes that on its merits it may become the seed of a just and lasting settlement.

The question therefore occurs: Why should not this good and promising plan be set at once in plain terms before the German Government and people, and they be called on to consider it? And if they agree to consider it, what obstacle exists to summoning a Peace Conference without further ado? The only reply we can conceive is that Mr. George's two remaining guarantees remain unrealized. We have not beaten the German armies, and the German Government is an undemocratic one. The second difficulty does not seem to us to be insoluble. Mr. George himself does not desire to dictate to the German people the form of government under which they choose to live. Neither does Mr. Wilson. What both want to feel is that they are talking to something that represents Germany and not merely the military caste. That is surely possible. We see no reason why the plenipotentiaries, not of Germany alone, but of every one of the belligerent nations, should not be chosen from their Parliaments and their political parties (including, of course, those of Labor and Socialism), as well as from the diplomatic class. A universal, or a widely democratic, suffrage now obtains, or is about to obtain, in every one of the nations at war. The negotiators will speak for hundreds of millions of men and women. It is fitting and necessary that they should bear a full representative character.

Thus far the field of negotiation is clear. The only obstacle is Mr. George's third guarantee. The projected peace may prove to be a good one. All the nations may be willing to accept it, or something like it. The world, God knows, is in need of it. And it may be quite possible to appoint negotiators able to formulate it, and as representative as you please of the peoples whose fate is in their hands. Only—the slaughter must go on till one side or another thinks that it has got enough victory, and the other enough defeat. No one can say when that point will arrive, nor how many more millions of precious lives, and thousands of millions of treasure, must be spent in order to attain it. Nor is there any special likelihood that an idealized melodramatic

"victory"—a victory of Waterloo or Jena—will ever be attained. The mass of the soldiers, we imagine, do not believe in it. Both sides have secured considerable successes, and we can fairly claim that we have brought the whole scheme of German aggression absolutely to nought. Each party has gone near exhausting the other. But with neither has the will or the capacity of endurance failed, nor is it likely to fail. We can go on bloodily assailing and weakening the foe, and he us. But if the object of war, as Grotius said, is to attain peace, and if the world is in sight of a peace which is likely to endure on its own merits, why go blindly on? If Mr. George's sketch-plan is sound (and it is very far from the wildness of our own Jingoism and the more calculating madness of the German Junkers and expansionists), is there not force and sense enough in both countries to call for the translation of its terms, and of those of our Allies, into a Note? There is. And the moment that proposition is made it will carry general, and if we except the fanatics who oppose everything that saves mankind from itself, universal assent.

For our part, we shall interpose no obstacles to such a process should the Government, having taken one step, decide to take the next. That is all we ask. They have, in effect, made a reasonable tender. It is "up to" Germany to rebuff, or to welcome and respond to it. If she takes the first course, her guilt will be immeasurable and her punishment sure. If the second, the war is at an end. As we write we learn that Germany has, in effect, accepted the Russian formula of no annexations or indemnities as the basis of a general peace, and has thus, in form at least, proclaimed the end of the reign of aggression in Europe. This restores Belgium and Serbia. It remains to establish and secure the rule of international right which this concession acknowledges, and thus the Clean Peace will be won.

#### THE ACHIEVEMENT OF 1917.

As we cross the threshold of another year it is useful to take stock of that which is sped and to measure the distance it has carried us towards our goal. Our end is, we say, to destroy Prussian militarism. If we mean that we intend to *compel* Prussia to be militarist no longer, it is well that we should realize at the outset that we could never be certain of achieving this result until indeed the last Prussian had fallen on some unknown field of Armageddon. A mental concentration upon political expansion, and upon armed force as the best means for achieving it, cannot be destroyed by physical means. Even to propose such an object to ourselves is to withdraw from touch with reality. But if our purpose is to discredit Prussian militarism so that on reflection the German people will cease to worship and mould their lives by it, we may be reasonably certain that that end has, in substance, been achieved. It is incredible that the German people can resist the verdict of this year. In spite of the shortsightedness and lack of imagination of the foreign policy of the Allies, almost the whole of the world that is free to express its opinion has, during the year, endorsed the Allies' cause. *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*. The world's verdict is final; and it is a verdict upon Prussian militarism. It is impossible to think that the German people will be deaf to that message, and the Majority Socialists who went to Stockholm were quick to appreciate it. But even if the German people could resist this lesson, they could not avoid balancing their bill at the end of the war; and there is no conceivable prize that can compensate them for their years of suffering and for the great ravages that death has made in all ranks of German citizenship. Men will remember that they grudged the Army nothing. But they will not be able to forget that militarism has brought them only sorrow and suffering.

If we were dealing only with the German people the war would be over, or perhaps it would never have begun.

But we are fighting a system. It was the German Government which declared war, and it is the same Government which will make peace, though our real pledge and security will be with the German people. If we are asked how far the year has given us a direct leverage upon that ruling power, we may answer that, on the whole, it has yielded us advantages that are practically decisive. In the first place, despite the Russian armistice and the Italian defeat, it has registered many Allied successes. The British Armies have seized Baghdad and Jerusalem, the two symbols of the dying Turkish Imperialism in the East, and they have swept the last small body of enemy troops out of German East Africa. It is idle to minimize these successes, and we may be sure that, however complacent Germany shows herself to the Turkish losses in Mesopotamia and Palestine, her feeling is not shared by Turkey. The Russian armistice, in effect, began at the end of July, and it was largely operative from the days of the Revolution. The armistice makes one change: it regularizes the cessation of active hostilities, and gives us some security against the further transference of troops from the Eastern Front. All the best had been transferred long ago. The greater part of the guns had been taken. The Russian front has long been held with skeleton forces, and peace would only mean the possible reinforcement of the Western Front by about 500,000 troops of indifferent value. The gain is important; but it is partly offset by the advantages which the Allies have secured. The Italian defeat has at least given our Ally a shorter line, and with the French and British reinforcements he should be able to cope with the full force of the Austro-German attack.

On the Western front the year has seen a prolonged series of battles for ridges—Vimy, Messines, the Chemin des Dames, and the Ypres ridge. Each of them is now in our hands. They have fallen by a great variety of tactics, and the uniform success is a measure of the ascendancy which the Allies hold on this front. They were, of course, battles for observation facilities, and the retention of the ridges involves an increase in the German garrisons below them. While the enemy held these positions with perfect transport arrangements, he could hold his line thinly and trust to the resisting power of his outer defences to give him time to bring up reserves in case of need. General Byng's success at Cambrai was another proof that this was no longer a feasible policy. As a result the Germans must immobilize a greater number of troops in the immediate area of the lines. The new system of defence by areas which bases security on a pyramidal disposition of forces, with the thickest and strongest body of troops farther away from the front of attack, has not proved successful, and, if Russia had not fallen out of the fight, victory in the field would already have been ours. The German Staff has been compelled to admit our tactical superiority by the retreat last March and the repeated readjustments since then. The violence of the recoil at Cambrai was the measure of his apprehension. So far as one can see he could have regained the ground at a much lower cost. He did not wipe out the British victory, for our troops still lie established in the Hindenburg line, and the faults in our dispositions which were revealed by his attack inevitably suggest that there was no need of the vast and repeated massed attacks. It is impossible, however, for us not to feel that the German Staff recognize their inferiority on the Western front. Their tactics during the year have been a confession as prudent as it is unambiguous. And the Italian rally has been superb. The year, then, shows a balance of victory for the Allies. The Germans have made way only where they were not resisted, and if the effect can be used to impress the German people, it cannot deceive the German Staff.

But if the year has brought the Allies moral and military successes, it has brought them more significant victories in the economic field. It is in this sphere that we possess the most powerful leverage upon the German Government. If we can imagine great armies of wearied men loosed to roam idle over their starving country we have some glimpse of the spectre which haunts the German Government. No one realizes as well as they that would be their own fate if such were to be the state of things after the war. If we make every allowance for



the sanguine character of the German mind, we may still conclude that the economic problem is regarded by the Government as crucial. We have been referred from time to time to the "war-map," and we can read the reflections of the German Press on the Allied problem of "ransoming" their occupied territories. We have indeed to ransom Belgium, France, the Friulian plain, Montenegro, Serbia, and Wallachia. But we hold all the German Colonies, Mesopotamia, and Palestine. And does Germany possess the wherewithal to ransom the territories of cotton, of rubber, of wool, of oleaginous fruits, of cocoa, of hemp, of copper, of nitrates? The year 1917 has seen the conquest of these territories by the Allies. To-day they securely hold them. Nothing that is possible at this phase of the war can rescue these lands from their hands.

It is interesting to notice how the more sanguine German minds attack this problem. They point to the numerous substitutes which necessity has driven them to discover. But though men and women may in time of war dress in fabrics woven of paper yarn or nettle-fibre, though they may wash with sea-sand, though they may go barefoot or booted in a creation of compressed paper pulp and metal, they will only do so on sufferance. Synthetic rubber has proved as interesting as synthetic diamonds—and of as little practical value. There are some who suggest that copper, which Austria-Hungary alone imported to the value of over 63 million kr. before the war, will be displaced by the substitutes used during the war. But it is difficult to believe that any perfectly adequate substitute can be found. Zinc and iron are useful; but they have not the electrical, thermal, and tensile properties of copper. With nitrates the case is different. It is certain that nitrates will be more and more made from the air, and to this extent all European countries will be less dependent upon their imports from abroad. But there has not been found any real substitute for cotton and no new areas have been discovered that can promise immediate help or considerable supplies later on. The cotton supplies of the world are practically all in the hands of the Allies. Before the war the imports of raw and worked cotton by Austria-Hungary amounted to 20 per cent. of her total imports, and practically the whole came from Allied countries. The case was much the same with Germany, who imported almost all her raw cotton (nearly half-a-million tons in 1913) from the United States.

The needs we have enumerated are obvious and admitted. There are other commodities, such as gums, spices, medicinal vegetable oils, and mineral acid powders, which are as essential to the restoration of the normal life-rhythm of the Central Powers. The yearly imports in time of peace were sufficient to support industries which had already a working capital in these necessary commodities. At the conclusion of peace both the income and the capital must be made good, and it is clear that manufacturers who wish to compete in the international markets will demand the raw materials with which they were familiar before. A German economist puts the necessary *immediate* imports of metals, fats, and oils at the value of 4 to 5 milliard marks' worth. This is almost half the total value of Germany's annual import; and, if cotton is to be added in, the amount necessary is higher still. The German economists realize that the exchange rate is a matter which will require serious attention; and yet it ranks as a comparatively unimportant detail, as compared with the necessity of obtaining raw materials. In the first three months of peace, another German economist estimates the necessary German imports may amount to the value of 20 milliard marks.

These figures give us some rough indication of how much the enemy is in our power. Transport is short. The Germans look to see a rationing of their industries; but the whole world must be rationed as to materials and transport. If a good peace is concluded, the rights of humanity will be strong enough to persuade the Allies to include Germany and her Allies in that League of Nations which at present has the world's impoverished stocks at its disposal. But should this be absent, the Powers which control supplies will be loth to pour into Germany a considerable share of raw materials and food-

stuffs. In other words, if the German Government propose a bad and makeshift peace, and we could imagine the Allies consenting to it, the German Government must expect short shrift. Therefore, it is idle of us to diminish the importance of this conquest of the year that has just passed. We have secured a moral sanction that cannot be without its effect; we have won victories east and west that show a remarkable change in the balance of military power. But the great victory is that which places in our hands the raw materials without which modern industrial nations cannot carry on. That victory is in reality a direct punishment of extreme militarism; and while it gives us at once the best leverage upon the ruling powers of the Central Empires, it must assure us a still more valuable influence in the future. For history will not fail to place the responsibility for the Allies' greatest gain on the shoulders of that Prussian military directorate which stood to lose most from it.

## Letters from Abroad.

### THE CAILLAUX AFFAIR.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR—It would be hypocritical on my part to pretend that I can take an unbiassed view of the Caillaux affair. That is not possible for anybody in France, and, in my case, it is made peculiarly impossible by a personal friendship, which it requires no courage on my part to avow, since it is already well-known in Printing House Square and its dependent chancelleries. If, however, I am biassed, it is by a personal knowledge of M. Caillaux, which is more than can be said of most of those whose bias is the opposite. Just because I know M. Caillaux, I know how preposterous are the accusations made against him, how remote from his real opinions. I speak of the accusations that would be serious, if they were true. No doubt a large proportion of the public believes them, as the whole public at first believed in the guilt of Alfred Dreyfus. But to anybody who knows M. Caillaux or even knows what manner of man he is, the idea that he proposed to the Italian Government that France and Italy should join in making a separate peace, or that he promised emissaries of the Vatican that, when he came into power, he would restore the Concordat and diplomatic relations between the Vatican and France, is too ridiculous to need investigation. Even if his character made such charges plausible, his intelligence would put them out of court.

A friend of mine showed the other day to his mother, who has a remarkable talent for discerning character from handwriting, a letter from M. Caillaux, of whom she had always had a horror, without letting her see by whom the letter was written. She declared that the writer of the letter was very intelligent, frank, loyal, impulsive, always said what he thought, and often said it too quickly. When she was told who the writer was, she said, being loyal herself, that, although she would continue to dislike M. Caillaux's politics, she must change her opinion about his character. Her diagnosis was extraordinarily accurate. Nobody could be less like the Machiavellian intriguer than M. Caillaux is represented as being than is M. Caillaux. His failings are impulsiveness, quick temper, readiness to unburden himself to anybody, and an inability to judge men. Some people think that if he has allowed dubious people to gather round him, it is because, since 1914, he has been glad of any support that he could get. It is nothing of the kind; he was exactly the same at the height of his political success. The reason is simply that there is a certain *naïveté* in his character which enables people to impose upon him. Like many frank characters, he cannot understand that some people are less frank than himself, and is too much disposed to take everybody at his own valuation. Perhaps there is also in his character a certain pride—like but not identical with that of an

eighteenth-century aristocrat—which leads him to think that he cannot be sullied by coming into contact with people that are not entirely clean, and also a certain rather cynical tolerance of human weaknesses, not uncommon in France, as certain great French writers show. But these factors are much less prominent than those already mentioned.

As a statesman, M. Caillaux is represented as being the enemy of England and of the *Entente Cordiale*, and either an advocate of peace at any price, ready to sacrifice any national interest, or else an infatuated admirer of Germany. In fact, M. Caillaux was an advocate of the *Entente Cordiale* at a time when the French reactionaries hated England even more than Germany, and when Lord Northcliffe was still prepared to "roll France in blood and mud." Nobody could be more convinced than he is that close friendship between France and England is essential to the welfare of both, and to that of the world at large. But he considered that France should have a foreign policy of her own, based on French national interests, and France has never had one, except for very short intervals, since the Russian alliance.

M. Caillaux's position in 1911 was a terrible one. Russia had definitely declared that France could not count on her help in the event of war with Germany, and the declaration was no breach of the treaty of alliance, at any rate as it then stood, for each contracting party was bound to go to the help of the other only in the event of the latter being attacked by two Powers. M. Caillaux, who had come into power four days before the "Panther" was sent to Agadir, knew that the French Army was not in a state of preparation to resist successfully a German attack, and that France would be crushed before England could effectively come to her assistance, even if English assistance had been certain, as it was not. In these circumstances, he made a bargain so good for his country that it was regarded in Germany as a diplomatic defeat. And for that he has been denounced as an instrument of Germany. M. Caillaux's policy at that time was much too imperialist for my taste; he was an advocate of "colonial expansion," and had always been determined to secure Morocco for France. M. Pichon, who had been Foreign Minister in the preceding Clemenceau and Briand Cabinets, had made an agreement with Germany about Morocco, which had never been carried out because it was, in many respects, unworkable. Germany had persistently demanded the application of that agreement or compensation. The compensation which M. Caillaux gave in return for the unfettered control of Morocco was trivial. It is a mistake to suppose that Mr. Lloyd George's Mansion House speech on July 21st, 1911, averted war. The most acute crisis came in August, when the German Emperor asked the Berlin financiers whether they could, if necessary, find the money for a war of two or three months. The Berlin financiers did not want war; M. Caillaux was informed through Vienna of what had occurred, and the result was a slump on the Berlin Stock Exchange, which enabled the financiers to tell the Emperor that they could not possibly find the money. That is the reason why Germany yielded on such easy terms.

M. Caillaux had made a characteristic mistake in choosing M. de Selves as his Foreign Minister; he made another when he did not dismiss M. de Selves after the latter had ordered the despatch of a gunboat to Agadir, an order at once countermanded by M. Caillaux. He may have departed from strict etiquette in taking the matter out of M. de Selves's hands, but the circumstances were too grave to permit of such considerations, and M. Caillaux was justified by the appeals of the French Ambassador at Berlin. M. de Selves had only to resign, if he felt himself set aside. Instead of that, he remained in office in order subsequently, with the help of M. Clemenceau, to overturn the Caillaux Cabinet.

It is from January, 1912, that dates the hostility of M. Clemenceau to M. Caillaux. M. Clemenceau, who is, and always has been a sincere Chauvinist, apparently held that war would have been preferable to the cession of an inch of French colonial territory, even in exchange

for the whole of Morocco. The present situation cannot be understood without going back to Agadir, for the Caillaux affair is the culmination of a long political campaign, which dates from that crisis. The reactionaries have another grievance against M. Caillaux, namely, that he was the author of the Income Tax, "one of those scoundrels," as Anatole France has put it, "that want to tax the rich." But popular feeling would never have been excited against M. Caillaux but for the assassination of M. Calmette. Large numbers of people were convinced that M. Caillaux himself was the instigator of an act which ruined his political career. But for it, he would certainly have become Prime Minister again after the general election of 1914, and he might once more have saved France from war, although, of course, it is impossible to say whether he or anybody could have done so.

No sooner had the war broken out than the reactionaries began to circulate the most preposterous calumnies against M. Caillaux. One was that he and the Military Governor of Paris had arranged to hand over the city to the Germans. A wealthy man of quite average intelligence assured me that, to his certain knowledge, M. Caillaux had received forty million sterling from the German Emperor in order that he might give £8,000 to every French colonel that succeeded in losing his regiment; the story was all over Paris. The gentleman who told me was much annoyed when I asked him whether he had obtained his information from the German Emperor or from M. Caillaux. M. Caillaux was alleged to have been shot for treason several times over. The reactionary press continued the campaign with less sensational, but much more dangerous insinuations. The "Times" took it up on the occasion of M. Caillaux's visit to Italy about a year ago. Then came the Almereyda and Bolo affairs.

I do not know whether or not Almereyda was guilty of treason, but I do know that the public is not yet in possession of evidence to give even the presumption of his guilt. All that is known is that certain papers regarding the Salonika Expedition were found in his house; they had been given to him by M. Paix-Séailles in order that the "Bonnet Rouge" might make a campaign for the reinforcement of the expedition. The letters from M. Caillaux to Almereyda reproduced in the indictment are of the most harmless and trivial description. One, in which M. Caillaux congratulates Almereyda on an article with the title: "Ah! ces Anglais!" caused at first some sensation, as it was taken to be evidence of anti-British bias, and was, no doubt, intended by the author of the indictment to give that impression. It turns out that the article, which has been reproduced in full by the "Petit Parisien," was, on the contrary, highly complimentary to the English, whose cheerful acceptance of a much increased income tax was compared to the obstinate opposition to such a tax in France. As for the letters to Bolo, they have about as much importance as an invitation to lunch. M. Sembat may well say that, whereas there was nothing in the indictment of M. Turmel, there were at least in that case the Swiss bank-notes, whereas in the Caillaux indictment there is nothing at all: Pas même les billets suisses! Il n'y a que les billets doux pour Mme. Bolo!

M. Clemenceau has propounded to the commission of the Chamber the new and strange theory that, since one of M. Caillaux's correspondents has died in prison and the other is arrested, M. Caillaux ought to be prosecuted. Pressed to its logical conclusion, this would lead eventually to the prosecution of the whole nation. B and C are prosecuted because they have written to A, who is arrested; E and F, who have written to B, and G and H, who have written to C, are next roped in, and so on in an endless chain of inculpations. Moreover, M. Caillaux is not the only person from whom letters were found among Bolo's papers; where are the others? Some of them actually received money from Bolo; others, occupying exalted situations, were on intimate terms with him and shared the Chauvinist views that he professed, whereas M. Caillaux's relations with Bolo were purely social, and they agreed to differ about politics. It has been erroneously stated that Bolo sud-



denly and mysteriously sprang into wealth and fame after the beginning of the war. In fact, he had already an excellent social position years ago, and spent a large income annually. He was introduced to M. Caillaux in 1911 by President Monier, Bolo's social mentor. Why is not President Monier prosecuted for treason? The answer, no doubt, is that he was in good faith when he recommended Bolo to everybody as a person of the highest respectability and irreproachable character. But why, then, is it assumed that M. Caillaux alone knew all about Bolo's more than suspicious relations? Nothing in the correspondence suggests it. The President of the Republic had such complete confidence in Bolo that he recommended him for an official mission in Spain, which was entrusted to him by the Government. Nobody ever suspected Bolo until last February, when the *instruction* in his case began. Even after that he was left at liberty for months, and, until the information came from America (apparently because the German Government had decided to give him away), nothing was discovered against him, and the Minister of Justice was convinced that there was nothing; the case against Bolo was on the point of being dismissed. It is said that M. Caillaux continued to meet Bolo after the *instruction* against the latter began. That is true, but M. Caillaux could not know more than the Minister of Justice, and he has a quality rare among politicians, probably because it is an obstacle to a political career, that of loyalty to his friends. He refused to believe in Bolo's guilt; so did a great many other people, including some who ought to have been the first to know what there was in the case. As for M. Léon Daudet, who now demands that M. Caillaux shall be shot at sight because he knew Bolo, he held up M. Humbert to admiration as a "great patriot" who had saved a French newspaper from the Germans when M. Humbert bought out MM. Lenoir and Desouches from the "Journal" with Bolo's money. And, when the Bolo affair first became public, M. Daudet declared that there was nothing in it and that it was a "diversion," intended to call off public attention from the Almereyda case.

There remains M. Caillaux's visit to Italy. Signor Martini, to whom he was alleged to have made the secret peace proposals, has absolutely denied the story. The story of the promises to the prelates has been denied by everybody concerned, including the Vatican. The rest is mere gossip. M. Briand was of that opinion. M. Caillaux asked him last February to hold an inquiry into the charges made against him by the *Times* and other papers, and M. Briand replied that there was nothing to inquire into. Neither M. Briand, nor M. Ribot, nor M. Painlevé nor M. Barthou has considered that the Italian dossier made any action necessary. No sooner does M. Clemenceau come into power than it is discovered to justify a charge of treason.

In the Press, although not in the indictment, M. Caillaux is accused of encouraging "pacifist," or, as it is now fashionable to say, "défaitiste" propaganda. The barbarous word "défaitiste" was first applied to those Russians who desired the defeat of Russia, believing it to be the only road to revolution. I have never met a Frenchman who desired the defeat of France, nor even one who wanted peace at any price. The division really is between the devotees of victory as a sort of metaphysical conception and as an end in itself, and people who want peace by any means, *provided that it is the right peace*. M. Caillaux is certainly one of the latter. His attitude is that of President Wilson and Lord Lansdowne; he has always believed in President Wilson and admired his policy. M. Clemenceau told the Army Committee of the Chamber a few days ago that, if he had serious peace proposals, he would consider them; that is to say, he abandoned the idea of military victory as a necessary condition of peace, although he may think that peace is not likely to be obtained without it. More humble folk who have dared to suggest that peace proposals should be considered in any circumstances have invariably been denounced as "défaitistes" by the Never-Enders, from M. Maurras to M. Hervé. M. Caillaux is no more a "pacifist" than M. Clemenceau if the latter means what he said, as I am sure is the case.

His offence consists in having ventured not to admire the policy of people who seem to know neither how to make war nor how to prepare peace.

The feeling in the Chamber is one of stupor, mingled with alarm, except among the reactionaries, who are naturally delighted. It is doubtful whether the commission would have decided to suspend M. Caillaux's Parliamentary immunity, had not M. Clemenceau made the question one of confidence. M. Puech has pointed out in the "Petite République" that the commissioners seem afraid to take the responsibility on themselves; for they take care to announce M. Clemenceau's declaration, and have decided to publish the whole of their proceedings and the documents supplied to them by the Government, a decision which does not seem to please the opponents of M. Caillaux. M. Puech thinks that these are signs of qualms of conscience, and he is not alone in that opinion. It is certain that, on Saturday evening, the dominant opinion among the Commissioners was that nothing remained of the indictment. But they argued that it was better for M. Caillaux that his innocence should be proved in a court of law. Perhaps: but experience has shown that in courts of a certain kind even the innocent are sometimes condemned, especially when there are political reasons for condemning them. Alfred Dreyfus was condemned twice by a court-martial.

The reactionaries have shown their confidence in their cause by demanding that the debate in the Chamber on the report of the Commission shall be held in secret session. M. Clemenceau has very properly declared his opposition to such a suggestion, and M. Maurras is distressed; he fears that a few months' hence M. Clemenceau will have cause to regret his decision. That is quite possible, indeed probable. It would be much better for the opponents of M. Caillaux if he could be prevented from speaking in public. That the debate will arouse violent political passions is certain, but that should have been thought of before the "affair" was started. Surely M. Caillaux's enemies cannot have imagined that he would tamely submit to be gagged before being knocked on the head. The consequences of the affair are incalculable. At one of the most critical moments of a terrible war France will be divided into Caillautists and anti-Caillautists, as it was divided twenty years ago into Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards. And, when the mischief is done, will the *raison d'état* be brought out, shall we be told that M. Caillaux must be condemned, not because he is guilty, but because his condemnation is necessary to put an end to the internal strife? But that would not put an end to it. Who can tell when the end of such a conflict will be reached or what it will be?—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT DELL.

[We think it necessary to publish this letter as a protest against the manner in which the "Times," by every art of suggestion, has endeavored to put the case against M. Caillaux as if he were a guilty man. Such an attitude is contrary both to the custom of our journalism, and, so far as domestic matters are concerned, to the rules of our law.—ED., THE NATION.]

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

MR. GEORGE'S speech in the debate on war-aims is, I think, a landmark. If it could only have been connected directly with the Glasgow speech, it might have been something more. In any case we have now (a) a rough statement or indication of terms; (b) a repudiation of aggressive territorialism; (c) a general scheme for referring territorial aims and adjustments to the Peace Conference. If we add Lord Robert Cecil to Mr. George, we can safely put a League of Nations into the peace terms and take the Paris Resolutions out. This clears a great deal of ground. The next move is with Germany. Essentially, Allied statesmanship moves towards a peace of security based on moral guarantees,



and away from a peace of domination, based on physical ones. What stops peace? The quest of victory, on this side or that. But supposing the Georgian sketch-plan is not so far apart from the German one? Are we to fight on, flinging away the flower of our youth, though we are essentially agreed, or even because we are agreed, and seek fresh ground of disagreement, which the pursuit of crushing victory on this side or that would assuredly raise? It is inconceivable. Man, rational-irrational as he is, could not be quite so foolish and so callous. Peace must be on the wing when such thoughts escape, half-realized, from the lips of statesmen. If they only knew how deep the response would be to a still clearer utterance!

THE best Christmas deed is General Allenby's message from Bethlehem; the worst is our bombing of the town of Mannheim (not the military works alone) on Christmas Eve. If this is the sequel, or the direct fruit, of the policy of reprisals, and of the shameful speech in which Lord Rothermere proclaimed it, let us at least have a clear avowal and a statement that this invasion of the hours devoted to the children's happiness, and to the lost spirit of Christian love, is designed, and that reasons exist for it. Its effect on Christmas-keeping Germany can be guessed; our own innocents will feel it heavily enough. But there is more evidence than this Christmas raid of the growing depravation of the soul even of war. Here is an honest man like Sir Conan Doyle, who, in a Christmas letter to the "Times," speeds his new religion of hate and unending sacrifice with a text drawn from the German treatment of our prisoners in the early period of the war. He compares the brutal kicking of British soldiers in German streets with our own custom of hurrying up hot meals for captured German air-raiders. A proper comparison! But instead of letting the one deed of light shine by contrast with the other deed of darkness, Sir Conan mentions *both* to the discredit of the people responsible for it. Hate and more hate still, and poisoned cupfuls of hate, to pour on Hunnish heads! The issue of the "Times" which gives this Christmas message the blessing of its largest type also rebukes the Kaiser's impious prostrations before his Junker-God. Impious, indeed! But is the Kaiser's Deity anything more than a magnified image of himself, occupying, maybe, the next niche to Lord Northcliffe's? If only the British and German peoples would bury both these divinities in a common grave, and hew their priests to pieces before the altar of a nobler faith!

THE Australian verdict against conscription is a heavy one, and to be duly marked. Australia is the most democratic of all the Dominions, and the most independent in temper in the Empire, or indeed in the world. Nowhere was the moral stand against Prussianism stronger. But Australia is also a self-centred, self-acting community. She knows her own needs; she is realist, almost sceptical in tone; and she will not be forced into a mould. Her problem of manpower is special to herself. She has no such ample reservoir of new citizens as Canada possesses. The Jingo Press did its cause no good when it over-idealized the extremely common-place Mr. Hughes, causing Australia to raise her eyebrows at such excess, and giving Mr. Hughes himself a bad start in the conscriptionist campaign. I suppose the main factors in the majority were the votes of the workmen, the farmers, and the women. But essentially it is the voice of independent Australia. I am sure she stands fast for a democratic end to the war. But she is a cool and a watchful critic. And our statesmen must have some imaginative feeling for her needs, and must not seek to draw her into a merely British, least of all into a territorial, adventure.

THE death of Felix Moscheles—even in the ripeness of age—leaves a desert place in many hearts. How he bore the war which wrecked the hope of his life I cannot imagine. He showed no outward trace of his grief; his saintly face was as calm as usual, and his address as

cheerful. A German and a Jew, I suppose he stood as far apart, in thought and character, from Jewish or German materialism as Lessing himself or the noble figure that grew out of Lessing's brain, Nathan the Wise. Felix Moscheles knew nearly all the great heroes of European liberty, from mid-Victorian times onward, and, by the sweetness of his character and the fineness of his intelligence, was indeed suited to be their friend. I do not know that he would be ranked as a great artist, though his portrait of his beloved Mazzini, which hung over his fireplace for many years, is one of the pictures of which I for one should never tire. The coloring is quite magnificent; but the glory of the picture is the intense look of the dark eyes, which direct and concentrate the power and spiritual elevation of the face. Moscheles himself, with his life-long pilgrimage for peace, was not so much an apostle as a saint of his profession. He lived it and looked it—an image of gentleness, clothed with the perfect manner which flows, not from culture or from goodness alone, but from the happy marriage of both. He had a great deal of wit, and could rebuke vulgarity or presumption in thought, maintaining the utmost charity to the offenders, and loving even war-makers in the spirit of the Epistle of St. John. I suppose this age cannot produce such men; it is too rough and noisy. But it is a kind of benediction on the world that they should ever be born.

I SAW Lady Anne Blunt in Cairo, where for many years she lived the life less of a stranger than of a friend of the people. It was pleasant to go through the stables with her, and watch her fondling her beautiful Arab mares, and describing their points and pedigrees. Her figure was graceful in age, and one liked to think of the grandchild of Byron that her bright eyes came to her through her descent from the poet. Certainly, she inherited something of his free spirit. She was no friend of Imperialism, either at home or abroad, and her presence in Egypt, and her knowledge of and sympathy with native life and thought, were correctives of many of its hard and vulgar elements.

I AM glad to receive from Miss Wilkinson a memorial of my friend Richard Cross (Dent & Sons), which includes, as it should include, not only a sketch of his life, and his friends' view of his character, but examples of the excellent literary work that he found time to do, by some miracle of abstraction from his many activities. I note especially an essay on the prophet Amos, equally good for its feeling and its correct scholarship. What Richard Cross did was indeed only less remarkable than what he was. There never was a more helpful man. He was the soul of at least two great enterprises, the land programme of Mr. George and the D'Abernon Commission on the liquor trade. I suppose he knew the art and business of local government as well as any man in England. Yet he seemed to have time to help everybody in every kind of difficulty. Such a man never dies. His life runs continually through a hundred shoots of fresh energy and hope.

MR. W. H. DICKINSON has made a quick response to my suggestion of an English rendering of Béranger's "Le Sainte Alliance des Peuples" by sending me the following spirited rendering, not only of the verses I quoted, but of the whole poem, which, as he says, is closely suggestive of what may happen in 1918:—

"I dreamt that Peace came down on earth  
Scattering flowers and fruits afar:  
The air was calm and the dew of her birth  
Quenched the smould'ring embers of war,  
'Heroes,' she cried, 'from British Seas,  
From French, Slav, Belgian, and German land,  
Peoples, swear to a League of Peace,  
And seal your bond with a clasp of the hand!'

"Unhappy folk! Hate tires your lives;  
No rest is yours, no sleep can be won:  
Part more fairly the earth God gives  
That each may have his place in the sun.

From the tyrants' car your limbs release,  
And then true bliss ye will understand.  
Peoples, swear to a League of Peace,  
And seal your bond with a clasp of the hand.

"With your cities in flames, insolent Kings  
Dare, with a sceptre steeped in gore,  
To count and recount your souls, like things  
They have seized for themselves as trophies of war,  
If from heavy yoke we pray for release,  
Under heavier yokes they force you to stand.  
Peoples, swear to a League of Peace,  
And seal your bond with a clasp of the hand!"

"Lest Mars should end his course in vain,  
For your suffering countries, frame new laws;  
That your nations' blood may ne'er again  
Be spilled for the sake of a monarch's cause.  
Let stars of evil influence cease  
E'er they have once the heavens spanned;  
Peoples, swear to a League of Peace,  
And seal your bond with a clasp of the hand!"

Was it a Pacifist who reprinted in the "Times" on Saturday Southey's denunciation of men who counselled peace? For the poem was dated April 21st, 1814. Napoleon abdicated on April 6th, 1814, and the first Treaty of Peace was signed on May 30th, 1814. Is that the sequence of events which the "Times" is rather subtly endeavoring to suggest?

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

BY AN UNKNOWN DISCIPLE.

It was under the cedars of Lebanon, where Hermon looks down on the sources of the Jordan, that Jesus told us of the great deeds he asked from his followers.

We had left the racket of the coast towns far behind us. The people from the villages round Tyre and Sidon who had followed Jesus for days had said farewell with sorrow when we came to the high lands of Naphtali, where the bad road runs from the coast to Damascus. The country was disturbed, and in the rugged mountains north of Dan, where the cold is always at home, there were robbers; so now that the crops were ripening it was not safe to leave them unguarded. It had been lonely on the road when the villagers left us. Caravans did not often use this way, and we were the only travellers. At first, some of the disciples carried with them the mood which they had caught in the cities, but slowly, as we walked, the keen air and the freedom of the wide views around had restored them to another mind. Peter had ceased to talk of the sights he had seen in Tyre, of the tall houses crowded together on its island site, of the mole, and of what sort the engines of war were which Alexander had used. Gossip of the doings of kings dropped from him as the influences of the high moor took possession of him, and he had fallen into silence.

We had skirted the new town of Ceasarea Phillipi which Phillip had built, passing the grotto where the Greeks worshipped their god Pan. We had seen on a hill spur the white marble temple which Herod the Great had set up for the worship of Augustus. And then we had climbed to the cedar forest.

There was absolute stillness here. The cedars spread their boughs in layer on layer of green above us, the ground was thick with orange-brown needles, and the hot sun brought out the keen smell of resin. Looking down through the scaled trunks of the trees, we could see the marsh lands and floods where the waters of Hermon fell into the valley.

We had a great talk there. Judas Iscariot began it. Jesus, in his teaching of the kingdom, had told the people near Tyre of how they must strive after good and never despair, and in his last talk he had spoken of the patience of God and of how he helped men by ordering their lives so that they had to learn their lesson or perish. Then, to cheer them, he had told a parable of a barren fig tree, of how God, who is our father and the gardener of the soul, had seen that the

fig tree brought forth no fruit and of how he had dug round it, and dunged it, and pruned it, and, at last, seeing it still brought forth no fruit he had ordered, as its last chance, that it should be cut down.

Peter and the fishermen, who knew nothing of gardening, had questioned the meaning of Jesus. Judas, too, who had lived mostly in Jerusalem, was ignorant of the nature of trees. But the people understood, and an old husbandman in the crowd, whose alert eyes were all wrinkled round with much working in the sun, had cried aloud in scorn of the ignorance of men who knew not the ways of fig trees.

"The Rabbi is right. It is the only way. It would grow again. Every gardener knows that the fig fruits only on new wood."

This had stuck in the mind of Judas, and now, lying under the cedars, he said to Jesus, and there was a shade of blame in his voice.

"Why do you always teach the people in parables?"

And Jesus, smiling, replied:

"Shall I answer by telling you another parable?"

So he told us:

"There was a certain man who had to travel to a far country. Before he went he called his servants together, and put them in charge of his property. He judged the capacity of each man, and gave him what he thought he could manage. To one he gave control over goods to the value of five talents, to another to the value of two, and to a third one; and straightway he went on his journey. He was away for a long time, and when he came back he asked his servants to give in their reckoning. And the first came and showed him ten talents, saying:

"Lord, behold you gave me five talents, and I have made them into ten."

"And his lord said:

"Well done. You have been faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many."

"Then he that had received two talents came with shame, and showed that his hands were empty in that he had devoured his talents with harlots and flute-women, and him the lord blamed. But the third, who had received the one talent, came and showed it him untouched as he had received it, and he said:

"Lord, I knew that you were a hard man who would reap what you had not sown, and gather where you had not threshed, and I was afraid lest I should make a bad use of the talent or lose it. So I hid it in the ground, and, lo, there you have what is yours."

"And his lord was very angry, and said:

"You wicked and lazy servant! You knew I reap where I have not sown, and gather what I have not threshed. How dare you waste the talent? At least you might have lent it to a banker, when it would have made some growth." And he commanded him to be cast out."

Jesus stopped. Judas, who had listened with a half-frown on his face, said nothing, and Jesus, watching him, smiled and said:

"Well, Judas, have I justified myself?"

Judas, as if half-reluctantly, smiled too, and said:

"What is your meaning?"

"That men must learn to use their powers. To those who try to have understanding more will be given, while from those who do not care, even what understanding they have will be taken away."

This did not please Peter. He grumbled as if he felt cheated, saying men could not help their minds, and that all were not born clever. But Jesus answered him:

"It is God's will to give you the kingdom, but if you have not kept the little, who will give you the great? It is the spirit that teaches. Begin therefore with little things, and seek from small to wax great."

Judas said:

"Men will never use their minds. They prefer repose."

And Jesus cried out:

"Do you think I am here to give repose to the world? I tell you no, but to cause division. I am here, not to cast peace but a sword on the earth. I came to kindle men's souls and set the world on fire."

His face was radiant and his eyes shining.

"I tell you that now the kingdom is being preached, men everywhere are forcing their way into it. It is God's will that men should have life and have it in greater fullness. Think you this will not cause division? If a man seek the kingdom, his enemies shall be those of his own household, and even his old familiar friends, in whom he trusted, will turn against him. But I am here to teach men to be lawgivers to themselves, and he who is daunted by any man is not worthy of me."

His passion woke passion in every man of us. It was as if a fire lit up in our souls and ran through our veins. Judas's eyes burned in his head, and Peter cried out:

"Master, tell us of the great deeds you said we should do."

Jesus looked at him and then at Judas, and a cloud came over the brightness of his face. The passion died out of his eyes, and there was a question in them as if he feared misunderstanding. He seemed to withdraw into himself as if seeking strength greater than his own, and, when at last he spoke, it was slowly as a man seeks for words to express a thing too great for words.

"All over the world, Princes oppress their subjects, and the very men whom they enslave call them Benefactors. The great exercise dominion over those who are weak, and everywhere men seek after power. But amongst you it shall not be so. For in the kingdom of Heaven, whoever wishes to be great must serve, and he who strives to hold high place must be a servant."

"Then there is to be no kingdom," Peter called out in dismay.

Jesus turned to him.

"Do not judge by appearances, Peter. Judge justly. The glory of the princes of this world is mean and poor before the glory God shows to those who love him. Look at the works of men and your heart will dwindle. Did any man ever yet look at the works of God and feel a less man because of them? It is because men seek the honors that come from men that they do not see the glory that comes from God. For God's glory is love and truth, and he gives us gift after gift of love. Yet God, who is the giver of all, is the servant of all."

Peter was silent. Judas Iscariot sat with his head bowed down.

But Nathaniel said:

"Master, teach us to see."

And Jesus answered:

"Is not the light of the body the eye? When your eye is unclouded the whole world is lit up. But when your eye is diseased the whole world is dark. So it is with the spirit. If men dull their souls by debauches, or drunkenness, or by the anxieties of life, the inner light which is in them is darkened. Therefore use your imagination: for in truth I tell you that, unless men become like little children, they cannot enter the kingdom of God. He that hath marvelled shall reign. If a man does not look at life with his heart full of love and trust like a child's, he will never see God. God reveals things to the childlike which he hides from the clever and learned."

"Can any man prefer darkness to light?" John asked.

"A man who lives an evil life hates the light, and will not come into it for fear that in it he should see himself," said Jesus. "No man who acts up to his light fears to face the truth. If men do not trouble to hear, they become dull of hearing; if they do not care to live in the light, they become blind. So it is with the Spirit. I speak what I know. Heaven and earth will pass away, but these laws will never pass."

When Jesus had said this he was silent. The great boughs of the cedars swayed slowly in a sudden wind, and far in the forest a bough cracked and dropped heavily to the ground. For a time the disciples were silent too, listening to the sounds of the forest, and then they fell to talk amongst themselves. They spoke of the crowds who followed Jesus and of the ways men worked to get their livings. Then they spoke of the things they had heard the people of Tyre and Sidon say, and of what men were saying of Jesus.

"One man said he was John the Baptizer, new-risen from the dead," said one disciple, while another said:

"I heard a woman say he was Elijah."

"No, it was Jeremiah," said a third.

"They all said he was one of the old Prophets who had risen again to help us," said another.

Suddenly Jesus turned to them and said:

"And who do you yourselves say I am?"

The disciples, taken aback, looked at one another, but did not answer. Peter kept quiet for a moment pondering, and then his mind seemed to make a jump, and he cried out, his eyes bright with love and enthusiasm.

"I say you are the Messiah."

Jesus looked at him, and there was a great affection in his eyes, but his voice was sad when he spoke.

"Do you know what it means to be a Deliverer, Peter?" he asked.

Peter shook his head. Jesus went on, speaking as a man speaks of things long thought over.

"If a man would be a Deliverer he must be ready to undergo much pain and to suffer. He will be rejected by his own generation. The Councillors and the Priests and the Teachers will not listen to him. He will be spat on and despised; he will have contempt and scorn for his portion, and at the last, it may be he will lose his life."

He ceased, and no one spoke. Peter looked uncomfortable, but after a moment he rallied himself, and began to rebuke Jesus.

"Please God, Master, that will never be your fate," he said.

Jesus turned to him, and there was pain in his voice.

"You are hindering me, Peter. I have a work to do, however great be my distress before it is finished. If a man puts his hand to the plough and looks back, he is not fit for the Kingdom of God. You do not look on things as God does, but as man does. Do not tempt me to fear those who have power to kill the body. They can never kill the soul."

Again he was silent, and when he spoke, it was with balance and judgment, as a man speaks of something of which he has counted the cost.

"Through anguish and suffering men enter the kingdom. He who wishes to be my follower must take up his cross and deny himself. If a man is not ready to lose his life for the kingdom he will lose himself. Can a man gain aught of equal value in exchange for his soul? And where is the profit if he gain the whole world and lose himself? He who loses his life for my sake will find himself. If a man endure to the end he shall win life, for it is by Endurance that men find life."

It was after this teaching that Jesus sent the disciples through Galilee to spread the Good News, but he himself went round the lake by way of the Greek cities to Capernaum, where he was to spend the summer.

#### A SHREWD CRITIC.

By the good fortune which does not always attend the just, a queer little book has come into our hands, entitled "Aphorisms on Authors and their Ways, With some General Observations on the Humors, Habits, and Methods of Composition of Poets—Good, Bad, and Indifferent." The book has been privately printed, and the edition is limited to one hundred copies. The author or editor, who professes to have collected the Aphorisms diligently, and strives to conceal his identity under the initials "A. B.," appears from his occasional notes to be something of a wit and lover of literature himself—one of those rare souls who, even in these days of flux preserve a faith in the permanence of beauty and wisdom, like ancient mariners who keep their eyes fixed upon the stars to which Ulysses set his helm. At first, we supposed him to be himself the author of the Aphorisms, but a difference in expression forbids the thought. And indeed, though he always admires he evidently does not always agree with the judgments of the critic from whose work he has so diligently and affectionately collected. So



that, rather reluctantly, we must leave "A. B." out of account, except for a word of gratitude for his labor, and confine our notice to the critic himself.

In point of time, the critic's studies have been limited. Like Mr. Austin Dobson, he is evidently most at home in the eighteenth century, though his researches have included the seventeenth century as well. Though occupied entirely with the poets, he makes no mention of the last century's names—great names, we should have thought, beyond question, and well worthy of his shrewd and trenchant verdicts. Nor does he notice the "nest of singing birds" which the present generation has hatched out. Perhaps he was startled by modern vagaries, and shrank from the passionate outbursts of "the lyric cry." One can imagine with what horror he would have regarded the boasted emancipations of *vers libre*, or the conscious irregularities of random construction. He has lived so long amid shades of the past that he can conceive no poetry without metre, and no metre without rules. We will not go so far as to say that his ideal is the Popian couplet, so compact, so exigent, so careful of the right word. He is too broad-minded for such exclusiveness. But still, he must, we think, have found something to shock his sense of lucidity even in so comparatively lucid a poet as Browning, and we rather doubt if he would have admitted the "Imagists" and "Futurists" to be poets at all. We fancy he would have said of them, as Dr. Johnson said of Macpherson's "Ossian," "a man might write such stuff for ever if he would abandon his mind to it."

We rather regret this abstention from contemporary affairs. It is carried so far that, in speaking of war-poetry, the critic notices that in the reigns of William and Anne no prosperous event passed undignified by poetry, whereas during the great war in the middle of the eighteenth century, "when France was disgraced and overpowered in every quarter of the globe, when Spain coming to her assistance only shared her calamities, and the name of an Englishman was revered through Europe—no poet was heard amidst the general acclamation; the fame of our counsellors and heroes was entrusted to the Gazetteer." Surely, it is worthy of remark that the present war has been exuberant in poetry. So far from the fame of our heroes being entrusted to the gazetteer, the "Times" published a poem a day upon them for weeks on end at the beginning of the war. It is true that when one morning it reprinted a Wordsworth sonnet without his name, one was quite astonished to find a really good poem there.

But so deeply absorbed is the scholar in the period which he has made his own that he mentions quite casually the names and works of poets whom time has almost buried, and he assumes a knowledge which, unhappily, we do not share. Who now reads Rowe or Akenside? How many have even heard of Stepney, King, or Garth? There is something tragic in the Aphorism headed "The Mutability of Taste":—

"Perhaps no composition in our language has been oftener perused than Pomfret's 'Choice.'"

When was Pomfret's "Choice" so diligently perused—more diligently, we gather, than "Hamlet" or "Paradise Lost"? What do our living popular writers say to such a statement? Does Pomfret's "Choice" really beat "The Rosary" or "The Sorrows of Satan"? So forgotten now that not one human being in a million even in this, its native land, has ever heard of it, what a vogue it must once have enjoyed, though silenced by the poppy of iniquitous oblivion!

We sympathize with scholarly research, but still it appears to us unfortunate that this learned critic should have devoted so many of his most pungent sayings to celebrities long forgotten by all but students and examiners. How keen is the following remark upon the poet King! How applicable to many a humorist, such as, let us say, the Editor of "Punch"!—

"His purpose is to be merry, but perhaps to enjoy his mirth it may be sometimes necessary to think well of his opinions."

Or take the very next Aphorism, upon Garth. The editor has headed it "The Disease of Biographers," and just in two lines the disease is diagnosed:—

"This oration was certainly thought fine by its author, and is still admired by his biographer."

But, leaving the sepulchres of forgotten ghosts, let us turn to writers whose living words still flit through the mouths of men. On the great names of the period which he has so minutely studied—on Milton, Pope, Dryden, and a few of their fellows, though not their equals—the critic has shrewd and sometimes startling observations. After much of the confused theorising upon poetry which we have lately heard, there is comfort even in the sensible simplicity of the very definition:—

"Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth by calling imagination to the help of reason."

With a regretful smile we read the following generalization, rather strangely included in an essay on Pope, who was a cheerful poet compared with most whom melancholy marks for her own, or whose sweetest songs tell of saddest thought:—

"To tell of disappointment and misery, to thicken the darkness of futurity, and perplex the labyrinth of uncertainty, has been always a delicious employment of the poets."

To turn to the critic's more particular references to Pope, how admirable is his exposure of the triumph of expression over vacuity of thought in that "Essay on Man," which is still enforced upon our young men as fit preparation for public office:—

"Never was penury of knowledge and vulgarity of sentiment so happily disguised. The reader feels his mind full, though he learns nothing; and when he meets it in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurse."

Further, in relation to Pope, whom, none the less, the critic admires with just discrimination, he touches with an exquisite satiric parallel those over-sensitive writers who, like Pope, sulkily threaten to write no more since their work is badly received:—

"The man who threatens the world is always ridiculous, for the world can easily get on without him, and in a short time will cease to miss him. I have heard of an idiot who used to avenge his vexations by lying all night upon a bridge."

Upon Pope's famous Grotto at Twickenham, the critic has also a gently sarcastic word, showing that the excavation was requisite as an entrance to the garden; "and, as some men try to be proud of their defects, he extracted an ornament from an inconvenience, and vanity produced a grotto where necessity enforced a passage." But as to the frivolity of landscape gardening, so characteristic of the eighteenth century, as we see in Walpole's letters, the critic's best observations turn upon Shenstone's addiction to that futile amusement:—

"Shenstone began from this time to point his prospects, to diversify his surface, to entangle his walks and to wind his waters. Whether to plant a walk in undulating curves, and to place a bench at every turn where there was an object to catch the view, to make water run where it will be heard, and to stagnate where it will be seen, to have intervals where the eye will be pleased, and to thicken the plantation where there is something to be hidden, demands very great powers of mind, I will not inquire."

That is a question we must leave to the County Councillors who lay out our public parks. But returning to the public fields of literature, we take as a model of ironic depreciation the following sentence upon Cowley's "Imitations of Pindar":—

"It is hard to conceive that a man of the first rank in learning, where he was dealing out such minute morality, in such feeble diction, could imagine, either waking or dreaming, that he was imitating Pindar."

Observe the skill of that sentence, the hesitating approach, the long delay, and then, at the very end the great word "Pindar," falling like a thunderbolt or a sledge-hammer's blow upon the imitator's inflated skull!

Upon Cowley a critic may play as he please; but when he comes to Milton, he must go carefully. And here the critic's Aphorisms are too apt to run counter to the judgment of the whole world. Great modern poets have maintained that "Lycidas," for example, is

the noblest poem in our tongue; and one could argue they were right, though comparisons in perfection are so vain. But how harsh and rude is this critic's opinion!

"It is not to be considered as the effusion of real passion; for passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions. Passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethuse and Min-cius, nor tells of rough *satyrs* and *fauns with cloven heel*. Where there is leisure for fiction, there is little grief."

It is an interesting criticism. It supplies food for much poetic controversy. But, on the whole, it is false. So, we think, on the whole, is this passage on "Paradise Lost":—

"The want of human interest is felt. 'Paradise Lost' is one of the books which the reader admires and lays down, and forgets to take up again. None ever wished it longer than it is. Its perusal is a duty rather than a pleasure. We read Milton for instruction, retire harassed and overburdened, and look elsewhere for recreation."

That is sensible and courageous. It is partly true; and yet how much more readily one agrees with this final passage of praise:—

"Milton's great works were performed under discountenance and in blindness, but difficulties vanished at his touch; he was born for whatever is arduous; this work is not the greatest of heroic poems only because it is not the first."

There we have it revealed—not only the foot of Hercules, but the whole vast body, so wise, so generous, so prodigal of labor. The present writer could only have missed the truth about these Aphorisms because he once had to get up Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" for examination, and so was inevitably blinded to the astonishing excellence of Johnson's greatest book, although it was his last. More fortunate readers must long ago have detected the source of all these extracts. In fact, we now find it confessed upon the title-page of the secretive little volume in which "A. B." has collected these "Obiter Dicta" of his predecessor in time.

#### HOW IT STRIKES OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

[II.—From "Westminster Gazette" of December 21st, 1918.]

A SINGULAR incident, reported at length in the Paris papers, seems to have escaped the notice of all the English foreign correspondents, unless, indeed, we have to thank the Censor for its temporary suppression. Having occurred so many days ago, there can be no possible harm in our recording the details of a scene from which the element of publicity, even of sensation, was certainly not lacking. It seems that Mr. Lloyd George during his visit to the French capital attended a performance at the Français of "Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie." Before the curtain had descended on the first act, the English Prime Minister rose in his box, and, pushing aside the President who accompanied him, invited the actors to pause while he addressed the audience on the conduct of the war, laying particular stress on the present conditions of the Western Front. With all that eloquence of which he is past and present master, as his severest critic will concede, Mr. Lloyd George sketched the situation as he sees it between the Allies and the Central Powers. That few of the audience understood English did not disturb an orator ever ready to upset ordinary human calculations. By some unforeseen chance, a number of British stenographers occupied stalls in the parterre, and, fortunately or unfortunately, the speech was reproduced through the medium of a translation in nearly all the French Government organs the following morning. It is whispered that M. Poincaré's resignation a few days later was not entirely unconnected with an event that seems to have impressed the French public profoundly. The company of the Comédie Française, it should be added, refused to proceed even with the second act of Pailleron's well-known play.

We do not propose to discuss Mr. Lloyd George's speech. At such a moment it would be the height of folly; it would be unpatriotic almost to embarrass our

own Government or that of the French Republic which, if it does not actually exist as we write, may exist before we go to press. Nor would we hamper by any untoward word Mr. Bonar Law in the debate which takes place this evening by suggesting that the colleague for whom he acts as deputy was not speaking for a united Cabinet, a united Parliament, and a united people. On the other hand, premature comment might lead Mr. Snowden or Mr. Ramsay MacDonald (both of whom will, of course, interpellate the Government) into thinking that we wish to misrepresent by anticipation some of their questions. Those questions, it must be remembered, they have a right to ask, not merely as members of His Majesty's Opposition, but as members of Parliament. Every member of Parliament is responsible to his constituents; whether we are Tories or Radicals, Jingoists or Conscientious objectors, capitalists or laboring men, all of us have responsibilities, sometimes greater and sometimes less than those of the talented artists who, to use a familiar phrase, "downed tools" at the Français. That they were stirred by some emotion, we can well realize, if we cannot express it. The French being a more volatile nation than our own, can always express themselves, not merely in prose but by symbolic acts such as can be understood of the most stolid Briton; and, do not let us forget, the most ruthless Teuton. But the English, too, understand symbols in their own way, and we venture to draw the attention of our readers to the amusing cartoon on another page, representing "A cow looking over a hedge," from the witty and incisive pencil of Sir Francis Gould, who has summed up the whole situation for us.

It is not so much what Mr. Lloyd George said on this momentous occasion; it is the circumstance and locality, chosen, we are not too rash in affirming, with some deliberation, that gives one to think furiously, as Mr. Belloc said, or is said to have said. Theatrical is the first epithet that will occur to Mr. George's critics. Yet, like a famous sovereign who lost her head, in a different sense, Mr. Lloyd George appealed not only to the audience of the Français, but to the larger theatre of Europe. That appeal will not fall on deaf ears. Though history has never made up its mind about Marie Stuart's appeal, it can hardly fail to make up its mind, sooner or later, about that of Mr. Lloyd George. This is an age of contrasts. If as we write the Germans are only fifteen miles from Peking, our American Allies are within twenty miles of Tipperary. Any misfortune with which the Italians have met in the neighborhood of Naples is more than compensated for by our successes in the Bavarian Highlands. If the Pope is pro-German, after all, the King of Norway is decidedly pro-Ally. If the Queen of Sweden corresponds with her relatives at Potsdam, we may be fairly certain that the Princess of Monaco will not forget her little relatives at Windsor, especially at Christmas-time. No one, for example, who remembers the last century will fail to contrast it with the present. The last century was pre-eminently the age of thinkers. Thought for thought's sake sounds a little old-fashioned, perhaps; still, to think at all is always an experience. Was it Bagehot or Bagshot who said, "Let us go to the root of the matter"? Provided you think, it does not matter what you are thinking about—at least our fathers seemed to imply. And the present age, though it neglects thought, concentrates on action. Our politicians are nearly all men of action, as Mr. Lloyd George proved himself to be in the incident at Paris. Irresistibly, and we say irresistibly advisedly—each one of us will ask himself, obeying that law of contrasts, what would Mr. Asquith have done in similar circumstances? Assuming that as a guest of the President he had attended the performance of "Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie," would he have interrupted the play? Would he have chosen that time and place for the promulgation of his future policy?

The answers are not beyond all conjecture. Mr. Asquith is an enthusiastic patron of the drama, and his more intimate friends say that he is a keen, though cautious, critic of the art. But over and above his social and political activity, and no one is more active, he is a man of thought. As a thinker, it seems more



likely that he would have selected the House of Commons for making any criticisms either of former or present colleagues. Always a little disdainful of publicity and popular applause, it is just possible that he would have chosen no larger audience than his own Cabinet. But, on the whole, taking one consideration with another, it is more probable that Mr. Asquith would have defended rather than criticised actions or inactivities for which he himself had been officially, if not morally, responsible. It is hardly an exaggeration to maintain that he would not have interrupted the performance of any play, however distasteful it may have been to him, and that he would not have addressed a mixed audience unfamiliar with the English idiom on a subject more suitable, it may be thought, for discussion in the Councils of the Foreign or War Offices. There is some consolation in the thought that if Mr. Lloyd George has made a mistake, and no one dreams of hinting that he has done so, Mr. Asquith may be expected to repair any damage, either by accepting office when called upon by his Sovereign, or by abstaining from criticism of his successors in any way that would hinder the work of the Coalition, or break the party truce, or exacerbate any of our gallant and more recent Allies. Of all Parliamentarians, Mr. Asquith in his long public career knows the instrument on which he has played better perhaps than anyone else, and Mr. Lloyd George might well learn from him some of that executive power which can only come by patient practice; the power, namely, of never offending, in the long or the short run.

## Letters to the Editor.

### WAR AIMS.

SIR,—This country entered on the war in defence of a treaty. Our initial enthusiasm is seen, when analysed, to have been due to the belief that we were protecting an infant international system, represented (however inadequately) by treaties, which we now hope to see develop into an adult League of Nations. This original aim is sufficiently indicated by the formula "Restitution, Reparation and Guarantees." Unfortunately, there is a growing suspicion that three of the major allies, Italy, France and Great Britain, have certain adventitious aims for which it cannot be claimed (as it might be for the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine and Italia Irredenta) that they are even remotely connected with the security of the international system. If any of the Allies seek to use the future peace negotiations as a means, either to serve their own fancied imperialistic and economic interests, or, to inflict unnecessary damage (engendering *revanche*) on our enemies, the moral atmosphere will be so tainted that the birth of the League of Nations will be as abortive as the Holy Alliance. For this reason it is a pity that the Prime Minister, in stating that our war aims have not changed, and in relegating (as is perhaps inevitable) incidental problems of territory to settlement at the negotiations, could not add a definite disclaimer of all intention of territorial or economic aggrandisement. It is such a negative definition of our war aims which is really desired by his critics. They wish to be assured that the primary object of the war will not be stultified by the defenders of international right taking for themselves a yard of uncompensated territory, or a single economic privilege.

It is easy to agree with M. Clémenceau that "our war aims are victory." Peoples and armies do not usually fight in order to be beaten. His statement may even be true in the less obvious sense that victory is in this war an end in itself, since, without it, Germany's faith in militarism will, perhaps, not be destroyed. But one very desirable means to victory is an unmistakable denial of all selfish ambitions. It is an indispensable means, because, without it, enthusiasm among our peoples and armies cannot be rekindled, and the credit of the enemy Governments in their own and neutral countries cannot easily be shaken; these Governments stimulate the efforts of their war-weary subjects by attributing aims of conquest to the Allies. The absence of a categorical denial can be read as an implied admission, especially when such a reading can be abundantly supported by quotations from our Jingo press.

But even more important is the effect of uncertainty on the moral of our own peoples and armies. It is even conceivable that the latter might be more stimulated by an avowal of aims of conquest than by the present atmosphere of doubt. It is natural that each Ally should interpret this defensive war to some extent from the point of view of its own national needs.

Each has different war aims; when we come to particularize, they range from those of America to those of Italy; when any statement is made each Ally usually speaks only for itself; but if there are certain definite aims (as there must be) which are common to all, why cannot this highest common factor be expressed by a conference in a form rendered as concrete as is practicable, and promulgated to the world?

In order to express this highest common factor of the war aims of the Allies with the maximum of precision, it is desirable to answer the following *interrogatoire*:—

(1) Do the three major European Allies seek territorial acquisitions or "spheres of influence" in any of the following areas: the German Reichsland, Trieste, Dalmatia, Albania, Anatolia, Armenia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and the German colonies? If so, what, and with what justification? If on the plea of "disannexation," what period of time is regarded as sufficient to give a prescriptive right against disannexation of territory annexed in the past? If fifty years (say) is selected as the minimum period of prescription, will the Allies retrocede any territory annexed by them during the last fifty years? If, again, projected annexations are justified on the ground of the natural desires and welfare of the inhabitants, will an opportunity be given to test the wishes of the latter by referendum or otherwise?

(2) Do the Allies propose, as a merely punitive measure, to exclude our present enemies from foreign markets, or from shipping and other economic facilities after the war?

(3) Do they desire to destroy the German national union? Or to decompose the Austro-Hungarian State into six or seven petty principalities, all of whom would be inspired by mutual deep-seated racial and religious animosities, and find perpetual occasions of dispute in the inevitable inclusion of large numbers of their co-racials in territories allotted to their neighbors?

(4) Do they seek to democratize Germany? If so, by dictating a form of Government to her from without before admitting her to peace and participation in a League of Nations; or by leaving German democracy to its own development, which must be as inevitable and rapid in peace as it is hindered by the pretensions of militarism, by fear for the safety of the State and by the patriotic or enforced silence of criticism in time of war?—Yours, &c.,

B. E. F.

### LIBERAL SCOTLAND AND THE GOVERNMENT.

SIR,—It is impossible as yet to ascertain the mind of Scotland in regard to Lord Lansdowne's letter. Since the war began the platform has scarcely been a free vehicle of dissent from the Government. The two chief newspapers are adverse to the letter, though even these are opposed to it not so much on its merit as because of its untimeliness. But everybody knows, as the Parliamentary Representation of Scotland shows, that these newspapers do not reflect Scottish opinion. A stalwart old Radical, on being asked the other day by a friend of mine why he, of all men, read one of the two replied: "I read it just to argue wi' it." The percentage of believers in their political doctrine among these readers cannot be large.

As stated in a recent issue of THE NATION, the "Aberdeen Free Press," which is widely read in the North of Scotland, and the "Edinburgh Evening News"—a journal which attained to great influence under the editorship of the most capable Scottish journalist of his time, and has now an immense circulation among the working classes and a rapidly growing general circulation, are favorable. The latter calls for an open support of Lord Lansdowne by all who are credited with sympathy with its object, and expresses disappointment with the lukewarmness of such support as has been given to it by Mr. Asquith and his colleagues on the front Opposition Bench.

I think it is beyond all doubt that the letter emanating from a statesman with the antecedents of Lord Lansdowne has had great weight with men of reasonable mind; that it has converted many to his view, and been welcomed with glad surprise by many men who have found in the expression of their own opinion and feeling in regard to the course which the Government is steering.

Within the last three weeks there have been other symptoms of dissatisfaction with the Government. The Scottish Church, with all its branches, whether to its credit or discredit, has abstained from all criticism of the Government. That can be no longer said. At its December meeting, the Metropolitan Presbytery of the United Free Church made a unanimous protest against the censoring of leaflets. The protest was moved by a minister of eminence in the Church, one of the last men to be restive under reasonable Government. In his speech he made reference to the case of THE NATION as a signal proof of the fatuousness of the Censorship.

At a meeting this week, the Glasgow Presbytery of the same Church adopted a resolution that it could take no part in the Food-Economy Campaign until the Government prohibits the further manufacture of alcoholic liquor.

WILLIAM MORISON.

Edinburgh. Dec. 20th, 1917.



## UNPARDONABLE.

SIR,—I observe the following sentence in an article entitled "The Power of Darkness" in your current issue: "The war has even destroyed the Victorian poet's unhappy picture of a society in which men sit and hear each other groan." Keats, a Victorian poet! Far more may Charles Dickens be counted as a contemporary of King George V. I venture to beg you to instruct some of your excellent critics of letters to keep a watchful eye on the gentlemen who write on politics and affairs. And I would urge your contributor, if he values his skin, not to divulge his identity to Sir Sidney Colvin.—Yours, &c.,

CREWE.

Crewe Hall, Crewe, Dec. 23rd, 1917.

[Lord Crewe has an hereditary right of protesting against such an error. It arose from a moment's mental confusion of Keats with the later Victorian æsthetic movement in poetry and art, of which he was, of course, a forerunner.—THE WRITER.]

## THE PONTIFICATE OF PIUS THE NINTH.

SIR,—I do not understand your methods of controversy. Let me recapitulate. I. Your reviewer of Newman's Letters applies the term "odious" to the Pontificate of Pius IX. Mr. Francis Wellesley therefore asks, on what grounds? II. You reply in an editorial note, that you presume your reviewer referred to the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. III. Therefore I protest against the term "odious" being applied, even by inference to that dogma. IV. You answer—in effect—that any "Liberal" theologian would regard this Pontificate of Pius IX. as "odious," and add that you "imagine" Lord Acton might be quoted in defence of your reviewer.

You do well to use the word "imagine." I should be glad to see any passage from Lord Acton's published works or letters in which he ever said anything which could be quoted—from a theological standpoint—against the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Whatever Lord Acton may have thought, said, or written as to the opportuneness of the publication of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and the infallibility of the Pope, he accepted both as a sound Catholic Churchman would. Had he not done so, he, being an honest man, would have left the Church. Give me one single instance of his disbelief in these dogmas. Meanwhile, I will refer you to his famous letter to the "Times" newspaper, in which he said that his communion with his Church was "dearer than life," and that (in his opinion) that Church stood secure "on the sure ground of an institution and a guidance that are Divine."

Nor do I understand the methods of your Reviewer, who, in your last issue, quotes a passage from the late Mr. Wilfrid Ward's Life of Newman, omits its context, explains it in a sense wholly foreign to its plain meaning, and, without saying so, italicises a passage which neither Newman nor his biographer italicised. Newman did not refer to Pius IX. nor to his Pontificate in any way in this passage, but to the undeniably slow methods of the Curia at Rome. Why then does your Reviewer present a twisted meaning of this passage? Is not all this of a piece with the usual characteristic methods of Protestant and Liberal controversialists who insist on full liberty for themselves, but carefully give none to opponents, whose very terminology, indeed, they have an extraordinary trick of purposely perverting?—Yours, &c.,

J. S. FLETCHER.

The Crossways, Hambrook, near Emsworth, Hampshire.

December 21st, 1917.

[We are sorry our methods of controversy do not appeal to Mr. Fletcher, though we are glad to give him the chance of criticizing them. Surely the main point of the reviewer was that the spirit or the method of pontificate of Pius the Ninth was, in certain aspects of it, distasteful to the spirit which can fairly be called the spirit of Liberalism, not excluding Catholic Liberalism.—ED., THE NATION.]

## CROWN COLONIES AND INCREASED PRODUCTION.

SIR,—Early in the present year a body called the Empire Resources Development Committee was formed in London. Its Chairman was the late Rt. Hon. Sir Starr Jameson, Bt., C.B., Chairman of the British South Africa Company; its Hon. Secretary is Mr. H. Wilson Fox, M.P., one of the Directors of that Company. The other members include gentlemen prominent in political, financial, or social life. Four are members of the British Government.

It is not easy to state the proposals of the Committee in exact terms. They have varied from time to time. In all of them, however, so far as we have been able to discover from speeches by members of the Committee and literature issuing from its Publicity Department, two features are included. The first is that the British Government should set up in the Crown Colonies a body of *concessionaires*, business men paid partly by commission and enjoying a privileged position before the law,

who should carry on industries in those Colonies on condition of returning a percentage of the profits, not to the Government of the Colony and for the benefit of the Colony, but to the British Government in reduction of the war debt. The second is that a beginning should be made with this policy in West Africa. As persons intimately connected with the last-named country, we venture to address you on these proposals. There seems the more reason for this inasmuch as no member of the Committee, so far as we can learn, has personal experience of, while few, if any, are even indirectly connected with, West Africa.

There is nothing in the present condition or prospects of British African Colonies to justify this new policy, which is simply a return to the old "Plantation" system, in which dependencies were looked upon as estates to be exploited for the benefit of the more vigorous governing country. In the past the attempt to secure profit for the State at the expense of weaker races has everywhere failed, and in the present advanced state of intelligence in our African Colonies would inevitably produce discontent.

The policy is also at variance with the history of our own moral development, which involves the ultimate relation of Africans to the white races; it lowers our standard of justice, and is a negation of the established principle of "Equality of Opportunity."

The system of government which has grown up in West Africa under the administration of the Colonial Office has had certain broad results. The greatest is profound political peace, which continues even in such testing time as this. Subsidiary results are steady increases in exports and imports, with consequent benefits to British manufacturers. The native producers, thanks to increasing wants met by increasing production, thanks also to the patient efforts of the Colonial Governments, especially the various Agricultural Departments, are continually increasing the quantity and improving the quality of their output. As proof of this we may quote the recent statement of the Administrator of the British Zone of Occupation in Togoland, that during the first year of our occupation the land put under cultivation was greater by one-third than that in the last complete year of German rule; the statement by Sir Hugh Clifford, K.C.M.G., Governor of the Gold Coast, that "Cocoa cultivation in the Gold Coast and in Ashanti"—now the world's chief producing area of cocoa—"is a purely native industry"; and the statement by the Colonial Secretary, the Rt. Hon. Walter Long, in the House of Commons last month, that in West Africa "the supply of palm kernels and the palm oil brought forward by the natives during the war is considerably greater than the amount for which it has hitherto been possible to provide freight."

The central principles of the policy which has had these results are absence of forced labor, observance of the native land laws and customs and freedom of trade.

It is obvious that these elementary, vital principles would be profoundly modified, if not reversed, if the policy of the Empire Resources Development Committee were to be applied. Land being held by the tribe in common in West Africa, it follows that, in practice, bodies enjoying special governmental privileges cannot be set up without involving interference with the natives' land and labor. The *concessionaires* would be identified with the Governments in the native mind. It is significant in this connection to notice that the unfortunate fact that four members of the British Government are on the Committee is taken by the native press of West Africa—every organ of which condemns the proposals as an utterly indefensible attack upon private right—as an indication that the policy of the Committee is the policy of the British Government. We believe that such an impression is as groundless in fact as it is injurious to the fair fame of Great Britain; and we readily bear testimony to the fact that whenever a Minister representing the Colonial Office has referred to the Committee's proposals, his language, like Mr. Long's quoted above, has been unfavorable to the Committee's project.

There is a further reason for calling attention to this matter at the present time. If the forces and civilian populations of the Allied nations are to be properly fed during a prolonged war, it is urgently necessary that the important foodstuffs coming from West Africa should be largely increased. From this point of view nothing could be more harmful to the Imperial and Allied interests than a propaganda which shakes the confidence of the producers in the root-principles of British Administration.

Our French Ally, faced in French West Africa with a precisely similar situation, has dealt with it on lines the opposite of those suggested by the Empire Resources Development Committee. A circular just issued by His Excellency the Governor-General sets forth that:—

"In order to meet the mother country's urgent needs, the Ministry of Supplies purchases the whole of the crops of French West Africa. The Ministry of the Colonies on his part, undertakes to stimulate and intensify production wherever possible; and this he proposes to do by paying the producers 'largely and loyally,' the object being to 'produce and produce largely,' and it therefore is necessary to 'interest the producer' by frequent visits of political officers to the producing areas; by encouragement of merchants, and by absolute non-interference in buying or selling by the Government directly."

It is our conviction that adoption of a like policy in British West Africa will lead to the best possible results.—Yours, &c.,

W. NICHOLL, Chairman.

E. V. CROOKS, Secretary.

The Association of West African Merchants,

14, Castle Street, Liverpool.

December, 1917.

#### THE POLITICAL CONSCIENCE.

SIR,—Under the head of "Political Conscience" you print two letters, on which I ask leave to make a short comment.

The first endeavors with Lord Hugh Cecil to distinguish between the religious and the political conscience. That distinction seems to me false and mischievous. Conscience is a moral, not a theological guide. No doubt theological belief often determines our moral convictions. But the sense of moral obligation is that which ought finally to determine our action. Juvenal puts the sphere of conscience correctly when he says:—

"Phalaris licet imperet ut sis  
Falsus et admoto dictet perjuria tauro  
Summum crede nefas animam praeferre pudori  
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas."

As to Mr. Lee, his contention is that a citizen is bound to obey the law of the State (from which he seems even to deny the right of secession). No one will deny the legal right of the sovereign to impose any obligation on the subject, and to enforce its decrees by the severest penalties—even death. But a wise State will pause in considering the expediency, and even the justice, of using its power to the utmost; and in the case of disfranchising the Conscientious Objector we must bear in mind: (1) that the State is inflicting a penalty on men for exercising the right which was conceded to them in the very Act which imposed compulsory military service; (2) that these men have already undergone "legal" punishment for exercising that statutory right; (3) that this exceptional further punishment has not been inflicted on much worse criminals who cannot plead conscience, and that it is somewhat irregular that this additional punishment should only be inflicted on those who have admittedly offended on conscientious ground, while the common criminal, on the expiration of his sentence, regains all his rights as a citizen. The perjurer can again give evidence in a law court, the bribing candidate can again offer himself for parliament. The clergyman, deprived of his living for immorality, can be presented to another living. The fraudulent trustee is not incapable of being a trustee hereafter.—Yours, &c.,

SHEFFIELD.

Alderley Park.

#### WHAT DO SOLDIERS BELIEVE?

SIR,—“An Officer” has brought up a subject of great interest to many of us armed civilians. There would seem to be a number of people who imagine that the soldier looks on any time spent away from religious exercises as a time of gloom. The truth is as stated by “An Officer”—Church Parade is the “most unpopular feature of Army life.” It is not surprising. Soldiers are officially obliged to have a religion, and if, in the flurry of joining up, they are unable at the moment to think of one, they are entered as “C. of E.” Now what percentage of these men in civilian life are “C. of E.” or “C.” of anything else? Five? Why then should 100 per cent of them regard compulsory church attendance with anything but irritation? In addition, there is the business of “cleaning up,” being inspected, and all the fuss and flapdoodle without which, in the Army, it is impossible for two or three men to be gathered together. And naturally this is regarded as an entirely unwarranted interference with their highly cherished and well earned “day off”—hence the flow of blasphemous and picturesque language which always accompanies preparations for “Divine” Service.

At a certain Cadet School in Sussex (name herewith) it was decided, some months ago, to make Church Parade voluntary. Result—no Church Parade and the issue of an order to the effect that one Company would turn out each Sunday.

The Church has no more hold on the civilian in the Army than it has on him outside the Army. Therefore the armed (and powerless) civilian does object very strongly to being forced to listen to men (who, in many cases, obviously do not credit him with the intelligence of a Tierra del Fuegian native) preaching at him.

At the present time the soldier's religion is, probably, composed chiefly of a little faith and a lot of hope; that he will one day escape from the horror and misery of war; that he may be delivered from the endless parades—church and others—the dull, brainless routine of army life, and be a man again, free to walk how, when, and where he chooses, and to have his hair cut when he likes.

In the meantime it would interest him to know why the Padres are all officers.—Yours, &c.,

ANOTHER OFFICER.

## Poetry.

### TWO CHRISTMAS POEMS.

#### THE HOLLY ON THE WALL.

PLAY, little children, one and all,  
For holly, holly on the wall.  
You do not know that millions are  
This moment in a deadly war;  
Millions of men whose Christmas Bells  
Are guns' reports and bursting shells;  
Whose holly berries, made of lead,  
Take human blood to stain them red;  
Whose leaves are swords, and bayonets too,  
To pierce their fellow-mortals through.  
For now the war is here, and men—  
Like cats that stretch their bodies when  
The light has gone and darkness comes—  
Have armed, and left their peaceful homes:  
But men will be, when there's no war,  
As gentle as you children are.  
Play, little children, one and all,  
For holly, holly on the wall.

W. H. DAVIES.

#### MY BOURLON BERRIES.

I HAVE no land in Britain now:  
No farm, nor wood, nor stream;  
The War has drained me of my all:  
My life is but a dream.

I have no home in Britain now:  
My all is still in France.  
What tho' I roam in Godshill wood?  
My heart is in a trance.

My manor is round Bourlon—  
The wood they say we won;  
And tho' its paths I know not yet,  
My soul's there with my son.

I have no stand in Britain now:  
My steadings by Fontaine;  
I know my own's in Bourlon:  
Life holds me here in vain.

I have a park in Bourlon,  
A rue in La Fontaine;  
And streams run—where my boy has fought  
To purchase my domain.

I may not see my woodlands yet,  
They say, for many a day;  
But he still holds the fearful copse  
And keeps the foe at bay.

There is a wood on Godshill Brow  
('Tis Bourlon in my mind),  
And there the ill-clad larches gaunt  
Sob in the bitter wind.

For all around the glade is strewn  
With pine logs cleft and still,  
And where was once a pillar'd aisle  
The Holly roves at will.

The Holly berries tell me tales—  
What like is Bourlon copse:  
My hero's there—an evergreen,  
Splash'd with his crimson drops.

I have no land in Britain now:  
My son won through Fontaine,  
And soon in Bourlon's shatter'd glades  
I'll claim my blood's domain.

\* \* \*

I hear to-night we've lost the wood  
My manor and my stream:  
But mine they are while he lies there  
Where the Holly berries gleam.

I'll find his path along that stream  
And follow from Fontaine,  
Back where—in bloody Bourlon—  
The Holly bleeds in vain.

GEORGE I. BECKETT.

## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "The War and Liberty." By the Hon. Herbert Samuel, M.P. (Hodder & Stoughton. 1s. 6d.)  
 "The Motor Bus in War." By A. M. Beatson. (Fisher Unwin. 5s. net.)  
 "Germany the Next Republic?" By Carl W. Ackerman. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d. net.)  
 "Mountain Meditations; and some subjects of the Day and the War." By L. Lind-af-Hageby. (Allen & Unwin. 4s. 6d. net.)  
 "The Romance of Commerce." By H. Gordon Selfridge. Illustrated. (Lane. 10s. 6d. net.)  
 "Old French Nursery Songs." With music. (Harrap. 6s. net.)

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A GOVERNMENT which held the mirror up to its own nature would, of course, abolish the institution in these days. But since it is so careless of exposing us to the poignant contrasts and regrets with which the Christmas season dogs us, let us, who are in the midst of death, celebrate the divine birth of life and spend an hour with the carol. After all, the chains are not all broken, for did not the Lord of Misrule come into his kingdom on Christmas Day? Nowadays, indeed, the carol is pretty well laid with its fathers. A few perfunctory and husky youths gather outside the front door and nasalize that poor thing of the Rev. Dr. Neale, "Good King Wenceslaus," and the spavined puppets are put back in their sawdust. The "festivities" are over. Have any of my readers heard "Remember, O Thou man," "I saw three ships come sailing in," God rest you merry, gentlemen!" the "Seven Virgins," the "Holy Well," or "I sing of a maiden that is makeless," with its marvellous refrain "As dew in April that falleth on the grass," as they have been sung in England for five hundred years—this Christmas?

Carols and nativity songs ought, one feels, to be anonymous. To them, for once in a way, the *vox populi* is the *vox Dei*. But a great number of our poets have tried their hand at them. Herrick's "What sweeter music can we bring?" which was sung before the King at Whitehall, Milton's solemn invocation, Vaughan's "Sweet, harmless lives! on whose holy leisure Waits innocence and pleasure" and "Awake, glad heart! get up and sing, It is the birthday of thy King," Southwell's exquisite "New Prince, new pomp," Crashaw's very uneven hymn, with its refrain, like the very perfume of light:—

"We saw Thee in thy balmy nest,  
 Bright dawn of our eternal day,  
 We saw Thine eyes break from their East  
 And chase the trembling shades away,  
 We saw Thee and we blest the sight,  
 We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light."

Drummond, Wither, Ben Jonson, Giles Fletcher and others, have all lifted Christmas voices. More of the younger poets, too, than we would expect. Swinburne begins his "Three damsels in the queen's chamber" and then, of course, the lady's mouth is remarked upon, Morris's "Masters in this Hall" and "Outlanders, whence came ye last?" Coleridge's "The Shepherds went their hasty way," the dedication of Wordsworth's Duddon Sonnets to his brother Christopher, and (the best of the lot) Christina Rossetti's "In the bleak mid-winter Frosty wind made moan," with the melody within the sense that only she knew the secret of, are a few. Fletcher, too, wrote a beautiful carol in the pages of this paper.

\* \* \*

BUT it is the anonymous carols from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries that really count, whose clear, secret, wistful, earthly-heavenly notes really enchant the world. Not that even the majority of them are devotional. The inner man has a dual identity:—

"Now that the time is come wherein  
 Our Saviour Christ was born  
 The larder's full of beef and pork,  
 The garners full of corn."

Another:—

"Your beer, your beer, your Christmas beer,  
 That seems to be so strong  
 And we do wish that Christmas tide  
 Was twenty times as long."

Two stanzas from a carol in the collection "Round about our Coal Fire":—

"Delicate minced pies  
 To feast every virgin,  
 Capon and goose likewise,  
 Brawn and a dish of sturgeon."

"Hey for the Christmas ball,  
 When we shall be jolly  
 Jigging, short and tall,  
 Kate, Dick, Ralph, and Molly."

Wynkyn de Worde printed the earliest carol literature in 1521 ("Christmasse Carolles"), and in it occurs the carol of the Boar's Head:—

"Be glad, lords, both more or less  
 For this hath ordained our steward  
 To cheer you all this Christmas morn  
 The boar's head with mustard."

And so on through the centuries. One in "New Christmas Carols" (1640) begins: "Come follow, follow me! Those that good fellows be," not, alas, into the manger but "Into the buttery!" But hush! hush! hush! here comes the Food Controller.

\* \* \*

The wonderful thing about the more mystical carols is the way they can spin "things that you may touch and see" into a white samite that is the very apparition of beauty. Prudishness has banished one of the most beautiful carols—and poems in the world—"The Cherry-Tree Ballad":—

"O then bespoke Mary,  
 So meek and so mild,  
 Pluck me one cherry, Joseph,  
 For I am with child."

"O then bespoke Joseph  
 With words most unkind,  
 Let him pluck thee a cherry  
 That brought thee with child."

"O then bespoke the babe,  
 Within his mother's womb,  
 Bow down then the tallest tree  
 For my mother to have some."

"O eat your cherries, Mary,  
 O eat your cherries now,  
 O eat your cherries, Mary,  
 That grow upon the bough."

What miracles of tact the old carols can perform! I should call it gentility were it not so much greater and more serious.

\* \* \*

A GREAT number of these carols, before they were collected by Wright, Sandys, Ritson, and Mr. Bullen, appeared in black-letter broadsides, some of which, as rare as they are famous, are not in the British Museum. Literature owes a debt to T. Bloomer, who issued a number in the middle of the eighteenth century, and Jemmy Catnach in the middle of the nineteenth, which I hope has been paid with usury. The "Holy Well" appears in one of these. The Virgin addresses her son:—

"To play, to play, sweet Jesus shall go  
 And to play, pray get you gone,  
 But let me hear of no complaint  
 At night when you come home"

The children—being scions of the aristocracy—refuse to play with him, and Mother Mary bids him "dip them deep in Hell."

"Nay, nay, sweet Jesus said,  
 Nay, nay that may not be;  
 For there are too many sinful souls  
 Crying out for the help of me."

A good deal of art consists in reconciling qualities which diverge in actual life. The carols, then, that are so friendly and so remote, so wise and so childish, so strange and so familiar, so matter-of-fact and often so mysterious, have drunk the milk of Paradise. But (like their more powerful cousins, the ballads) the great point about them is that they avoid the beaten track, not consciously or capriciously, but because they go straight for their object as the crow flies.

H. J. M.



## Reviews.

### A GREAT PEDESTRIAN.

✓ "Life of Lord Lister." By Sir RICKMAN GODLEE. (Macmillan. 18s. net.)

WHAT exactly was Lister's contribution to human knowledge and welfare? Is his fame due to the exceptional quality of his mind, or to the nobility of his aim, or to the great range of flight of his imagination? Or, on the other hand, is it due to the fact that a mind no greater and an aim no nobler than those of thousands of unknown men happen in his case to have been associated with a reform of exceptional value to mankind? Then, again, leaving aside the social utility of his work and the technical side of his career, what manner of man was he? Lastly, how much of such exceptional qualities as he possessed may be attributed to heredity, and how much to those environmental conditions which, lying largely within human control, to some extent can be avoided or imitated?

With such questions one may reasonably approach this biography, or, indeed, any biography. And it can at once be said that Sir Rickman Godlee's book adequately answers them, or, at any rate, puts the reader in a position to answer them. To that extent, therefore, it is a good biography; and those who are interested in the progress of modern surgery, and in Lister's contribution to it, will find it valuable and sufficiently readable.

Sir Rickman Godlee is in many ways specially qualified to write the life. He is himself a surgeon of repute, and is a nephew of Lord Lister, with whom he was in intimate personal contact for many years. But our author is no artist in letters; and to those with no special interest in his subject, his volume will prove almost unreadable. His writing is full of the jargon which doctors commonly use in addressing their patients, and in making their October speeches at the opening of the Medical Schools. There is a doleful amount of this sort of thing: "For a short time the allurements of medicine seem to have been even stronger than those of surgery, but he soon returned to his old love." ". . . would settle down in London, but this was not destined to take place till after the lapse of many years."

The writing is flat and uninspiring, and the inevitability of every adjective and *cliché* has a very sleep-provoking and Church-like effect. It is indeed a pedestrian book. But it is by no means certain that a more imaginative and accomplished writer would have produced anything like so good and true a biography. For the life here portrayed is also pedestrian; and a comparison of that life with the enormous benefits to mankind toward which it so markedly contributed almost overwhelms one with a feeling of bewilderment. For, in spite of the greatness of the results of his work, there is no reasonable definition that would enable one to class Lister as a great man. Perseverance, honesty, clear-headedness, and singleness of interest and aim, he possessed in remarkable degree; but originality of mind, spiritual venturesomeness, imagination, and individual morality—which may almost be called the stigmata of greatness—scarcely figure in these pages. His one spiritual adventure appears to have been the "severing of his connection with the Society of Friends, and his becoming a member of the Episcopalian Church, from which time forward he remained in fullest sympathy with the Church of his adoption." Of humor there is no trace. In spite of his unusual ability, he appears to have shared to the full the pomposity which has made doctors the laughing stock of satirists of every age. Sir Rickman, who evidently shares this attribute, says reverentially of him that "his manner with strangers and young people had something of old-fashioned dignity handed down to him from the days when youth and age were separated by barriers that have now been swept away." In fact, a careful reading of the biography gives one the impression that Lord Lister was just a favorable specimen of the honest, simple, capable, plodding, conventional-minded, unimaginative, reliable Englishman, who succeeds as much through his lack of fancy and the mildness of his emotions as through his positive qualities of pertinacity and industry. Such men are to be found in every occupation; but when they happen to be farm laborers or blacksmiths their biographies commonly

occupy but a few lines in village churchyards. Peerages and tablets in Westminster Abbey are not for them.

All his life, Lister seems to have mixed with no one but surgeons, physicians, and pathologists, and to have had little real interest outside the processes of suppuration in wounds. It may be doubted if any record of a honeymoon can compare with that which Sir Rickman Godlee gives us with frozen solemnity:

"The young couple started on a three months' tour on the Continent, in the course of which they visited several of the most celebrated medical schools. . . . At Milan the enormous hospital with three thousand beds did not offer much attraction. He was struck by the huge size of the wards, but, the medical school being at Pavia, he hastened on to that place, where he saw the museums, and the head, forefingers, and thumbs of the celebrated Scarpa, reverently preserved in spirit, these being the parts of the body most used in surgery. 'It was strange, indeed,' Lister wrote, 'to look upon the countenance, very well preserved as it was, of one long since passed away.' . . . At Florence they made a longer stay. Here Pacini, the Professor of Anatomy and Physiology, who knew of his papers on the iris and the muscles of the hairs, treated him very kindly, and gave him a testimonial and some useful advice. At Padua he was welcomed by Banzetti, the surgeon, and from there a short excursion was made to Bologna, with its excellent pathological museum. At Venice, and later at Vienna, Lister paid much attention to ophthalmic surgery."

Vienna seems to have represented the zenith of the nuptial flight, for Lister himself wrote: "Best of all as yet, Professor Rokitsanski spent three hours and a quarter in going over his wonderfully rich museum of preparations of diseases." Next "they came to Berlin, where again Lister was attracted by ophthalmology. . . . From Berlin they went to Leipzig, where two days were spent, chiefly in seeing the ophthalmic practice of Professor Ruete. . . . They then went to Munich, with its large general hospital and important ophthalmic institute. The last German town to be visited was Tübingen, where "the surgeon, Professor Bruns, who was the object of my visit, spent a considerable time showing me his patients and museums." It should be remembered that Lister was then a young man of twenty-nine.

That his range of fancy was so narrow, and his imagination so limited is our good fortune; for it is largely due to these facts that Lister has contributed so much—perhaps as much as any man—to the saving of life and the abolition of pain. It may well be doubted if he would ever have discovered the scientific basis of that asepsis at which all his practice aimed. It needed the mind of a Pasteur to do the work of discovery. But, for the work of applying the discovered truths and theories to case after case, in the face of difficulties and professional scoffing, Lister's intellect and qualities were almost ideal. His career is an illustration of the enormous benefits which humanity may receive from the normal activities of an almost ordinary, capable person, with a natural tendency to the exercise of industry and perseverance, to the narrow specialisation of interest, and to the avoidance of spiritual and emotional adventures, and of all other forms of imprudence.

The state of surgery in hospitals in the first half of the nineteenth century was simply appalling. The average mortality after amputations was about 40 per cent.; and many distinguished surgeons urged that hospitals should periodically be pulled down and burnt. The mortality in the lying-in hospitals was even more horrible; in the Vienna Lying-in Hospital, for instance, over an average of six years, something like 10 per cent. of all the women died in childbirth. It would not be fair to attribute to Lister, or to the antiseptic method which he adopted and advocated, the whole of the change that has taken place in such statistics. For everyone knows that neither at the time of which we have been speaking, nor at the present time, are Listerian methods employed in the majority of cases of childbirth in the homes of the poor. Yet never, even in our city slums, has the mortality under such conditions been much heavier than in hospitals where every antiseptic precaution is taken.

Nor should one in fairness forget that, even before Lister, certain Continental surgeons, especially the Hungarian Semmelweis, had already laid down the doctrine that puerperal fever and other hospital poison diseases are caused by infected material due to decomposed organic matter. Semmelweis, indeed, by disinfection of the hands with chlorinated lime, reduced puerperal mortality in the Vienna Lying-in

Hospital by 60 per cent. But it is to Pasteur, who, by sheer genius in experiment, proved that putrefaction was, in fact, fermentation caused by the growth of minute organisms distributed everywhere by means of the dust floating in the air, and otherwise, that is due the honor of furnishing a scientific base, without which Listerism and all that it implies could never have even approached its present comparative perfection. It is, however, Lister's glory that, having once gripped the significance of Pasteur's discovery, he never ceased to preach the importance of its surgical application, or to experiment so as to bring its practical utility to its highest point. Although many of Lister's practical suggestions are now obsolete, yet the basic doctrine which he learned from Pasteur has, thanks mainly to him, become the accepted principle of all modern surgeons.

Lister has rendered us this great service by what he did rather than by what he was. Rarely has there been such dedication of self to a single aim. By devotion to his craft he served humanity. One can but wonder if most of us can serve humanity in any other way.

#### A LOVING HISTORY.

"The Loving History of Peridore and Paravail." By MAURICE HEWLETT. (Collins. 5s. net.)

You never know where you are with Mr. Hewlett. The extraordinary affectation of his prose style—in which you perceive a procession of pilgrims from the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, Anthropophagia, and Mr. Hewlett's own invention setting forth on a tour of language from the Tabard Inn, that is situated in Wardour Street—and his early experimental verse, had not prepared us for that fine epic, "The Song of the Plough," any more than for this "Loving History." Heaven knows what a stickler for poetic etiquette would make of some of Mr. Hewlett's turns of phrase, force, and rhythm. The following, shall we say, reccoco imagery:—

"Of his own bowels he weaves the lures  
Which snare him to the Devil's larder:  
On wings of pride he towers, to spin  
Head downwards from an air too thin."

Other such examples of license are making "patience" a trisyllable at the end of a line; in such bursts (plump in the middle of a piece of tragic import) as "O high young heart so put upon" and more of the kind. Nor would it be well to mock at this ceremonious critic. On the most generous scale of poetic values, Mr. Hewlett's lapses have to be noticed, because they advertise themselves. We must not fall into the error of condoning the harsh, the uncouth, and the extravagant in verse, because it appears "virile." Another point has to be weighed in the narrative. "The Loving History" is the story of how the monk Vigilas adopts and is tempted by a witch-child, Paravail; of her Pagan love for the shepherd boy Peridore; of the frenzied jealousy, self-deceiving sanctity, and exorcisms of Vigilas (very well done); of her rescue after death by Peridore; and of how she was carried by him to the Fount of Grace, there (according to the medieval belief) to find her soul in the milk taken in from the breast. After so much modern verse about the industrial system and the way motors change their gear when going up hill, it is a fine thing to read a legendary tale like this, susceptible, as all the great stories that have attracted their generation are, of so much interpretive suppleness and vigor, and as speculatively modern as you please. But we must confess to finding Mr. Hewlett's material intractable when he gets within sight of land. We moderns have certainly lost the divine seriousness in detail, the sweet naïveté in familiarity that make us feel like the banished from Eden when we read the early English songs. At any rate, we can feel the supernatural machinery of the latter part of Mr. Hewlett's romance as very little else. And it is difficult for us to avoid being impressed a trifle ludicrously rather than sublimely by the following stanza in which Paravail, as Marlowe put it the other way about, sucks in her soul:—

"And after striving she  
Grappled the fountain of her meat:  
Murmurs anon, the pulsing beat  
Of drinking, and the ecstasy  
Of giver and given fill'd his ears  
With rhythm and his eyes with tears."

In this latter part, we are afraid Mr. Hewlett joins hand with his material to alienate us. Such lines as "grappled the fountain of her meat," on the most indulgent reading, may strike us as a bold, but certainly not a graceful and happy plunge into the turbid flood of mixed metaphor. Nine times out of ten it is axiomatic that grace and proportion in poetry, so far from being a negation of strength, are its endorsement.

Mr. Hewlett's poem then is not a unity, either in structure or expression. Yet, though he sets out to conquer by violence rather than persuasion, though, when he meets resistance, he is inclined to use crude, clumsy, and perfunctory methods, yet conquer he does. We can bate the breath without in the least feeling that the reputation of the author and the curiosity of his narrative oblige us to take measures thereto. Through two-thirds of the poem, the verse is masculine, closely knit, and fast without being febrile; the poet's love for his material prevents it from being merely archaic, and his individuality endows it with sharp outline and meaning. Mr. Hewlett can be languorous enough in some of his patchouli prose; but this poem of his is lean and active, rather too much of a sprinter, indeed, at times. But the real reason why we can see the legend he has brought to life again with the same zeal and pungency that he sees it, has ultimately nothing to do with the legend. How false is the shibboleth to which so many moderns have vowed allegiance, that when the artist gets to know his subject matter, he gets to know his art! On the contrary, the more independent of his subject, the greater the artist. It is the same misapprehension that blames Shakespeare for putting a ruff round the neck of his Roman citizens. Thus Mr. Hewlett gives an ever new interest and a genuine intellectual strength to his legend by swinging it out into the broad issues of human conduct and character. The school of abstractions, the school of actual observation—neither of them get anywhere. It is the chaplain who marries them that is worth while. And, however imperfectly, Mr. Hewlett has gone some way towards realising this in the shape and text of a medieval legend.

#### A GERMAN ON TURKEY.

"Two War Years in Constantinople." By Dr. HARRY STÜRMER. (Hodder & Stoughton. 3s. 6d. net.)

THE most obviously remarkable thing about this book is that the author is a German, who has turned against his country. Of course, there are English people who will see nothing strange in this, though at home they proclaim patriotism as the chief cardinal virtue, and condemn all who refuse to cry "My country, right or wrong." Still, the bonds that hold a man to the land of his birth, education, and habits, are so strong, the roots of his being are so intimately interwoven with her mind and history, that one suspects something unusual in a German who lays stress, not only upon the errors of his country's politicians, but even upon her character and policy as a whole, and appears to desire the defeat of herself and her allies. There is much—indeed, everything—in modern German military policy to disgust a mind of the best German type. But none the less, the attitude, however enviable to the abstract philosopher, is rather remote from common humanity.

It is rather remarkable that the two accounts we have had of life in Turkey during the war should be written, one by the German Dr. Stürmer, the other ("Inside Constantinople") by Mr. Lewis Einstein, an American in the Embassy there, but we suppose of German origin, and that both should be strongly pro-Ally in their sympathies. If, however, we set all prejudice aside, we may read the present volume with the interest which always belongs to information about the conditions of life in a country with which we are at war. Dr. Stürmer had opportunities for observation, for he was correspondent of the "Kölnische Zeitung" at Constantinople during the greater part of 1915 and the whole of 1916. His account is not so detailed as Mr. Einstein's, who simply published his diary. It is rather, as he says, an essay than a history, partly, no doubt, because he had to leave all his notes and papers behind him when at last he made his way out into Switzerland through Germany. But, though he is sometimes mistaken in his detail, and his detestation of the Young Turk party may at

times mislead him, his general conclusions about them and the whole condition of Turkey are probably justified.

Unhappily, he gives us little or no definite information about the Dardanelles Expedition, though he was for some time present with the Turkish armies on that front. His sympathy was with their opponents, our men who strove so gallantly and vainly for a victory which must have ended the war had not our authorities at home persisted in regarding the whole affair as a "side show" of secondary importance. From the first he writes:

"Already I was beginning to ask myself whether my sympathies would not gradually turn more and more definitely to those who were vainly storming these strong Turkish forts from the sea: for the cause of true civilisation, the cause of liberty, was manifestly on their side."

"On the one side," he continues, he saw "brave but stupid Anatolians, accustomed to dirt and misery; on the other, cultured and highly civilised men, sportsmen from the colonies who had hurried from the furthest corners of the earth to fight, not only for the British cause, but for the cause of civilisation."

He repeats what was certainly the belief of Mr. Churchill (then First Lord), and of some among our admirals as well, that the sacrifice of a few more ships on March 18th (the day of our main naval attack upon the Straits) would have decided the fate of the Dardanelles. The German naval gunners who manned the batteries at Chanak told him they could not have held out much longer. It will be remembered that Enver said the same (first Dardanelles Report), and all the archives, stores of money, &c., were then removed from the City to Konia. They were removed again when the British victory appeared certain during the August battles which we mistakenly call "Suvla." And on this occasion Dr. Stürmer writes again:—

"My sympathies were all for those thousands of fine colonial troops—such men as one seldom sees—sacrificing their lives in one last colossal attack, which if it had been prolonged ever for another hour might have sealed the fate of the Straits, and would have meant the first decisive step towards the overthrow of our forces; for the capture of Constantinople would have been the beginning of the end. I am not ashamed to confess that, German as I am, that was the only feeling I had when I heard of the British victory and the subsequent British defeat at Anafarta."

These, with another of similar character, are, naturally, the passages most interesting to English readers. In detail, as we noticed, they are sometimes inaccurate (Suvla is put in September instead of August, and the Anzacs are spoken of as though no English or French forces took part); but the conclusion is justified. The Dardanelles Expedition was our most brilliant strategic conception, which under different methods and circumstances might conceivably have ended the war nearly two years ago.

The rest of the book is mainly occupied with a vigorous indictment of the Enver-Talaat Government, chiefly on the grounds of its cruelty and corruption. Incidentally we read interesting character sketches of the chief figures in the Young Turk party. For the future, Dr. Stürmer looks to Constantinople as a free port, the Straits as a free highway, and the Turks as a free and contented people cultivating Asia Minor in peace.

#### THE SOLDIER AS POET.

"The Muse in Arms." Edited, with an Introduction, by E. B. OSBORN. (Murray. 6s. net.)

This is not an ordinary anthology, either in its sources or in the sum and quality of its emotional effect. Mr. Osborn, who is known as a generous appraiser of current verse, has here collected to the advantage of us all a hundred and thirty poems, for the most part written by men who have served—many of them have been killed—in the war. We gather that it is his intention to widen the range of subsequent editions by entertaining soldier-poets of the Dominions, to make way for whom and such new home singers as shall become eligible he may retire the few civilians in his present company. His collection would then conform still more strictly to its true purport; it will be even more than the present volume representative of "what passes in the British warrior's soul when, in moments of aspiration or inspiration, before or after action or in the busy days of self-preparation for self-sacrifice, he

has glimpses of the ultimate significance of warfare." There has been nothing like this performance of the Muse in Arms before in the history of English literature, nor, indeed, in any other literature, and the same may be said of the audience that awaits it. The verse in this book, despite its various accents, seems to come as from one voice—too much so would possibly be a just criticism of its literary content. No less true is it of its listeners that they will lend it a single ear. For authentic poetry of this war there must be awaiting—to what extent may serve as a test of the national sensibility—a hearing made fit by concentration upon the soldier's experience, and by a saturation of the mind in contemplation. Around such verse there is thus established the ideal relationship postulated by Mr. Mark Liddell between the poet and his audience always, a communal consciousness drawing impressionability at the same source from which comes the poet's power of stimulating it. If only because there is a vicarious element in each soldier-poet's experience, the indebted sense of which in us sharpens the edge of our understanding, and opens the avenues to our sympathies, we can say of him: "He is one of us!"

The poetry in this volume is indubitably authentic of the war, if rather less than adequate to it. There is scarce a piece of which we cannot be sure that its author *knows*. For them all, unpractised singers as well as the others already long fledged, War has opened out

"a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape."

But the omissions in their notes are curious. Mr. Osborn, in his admirable introduction, remarks on his inability to find a William Barnes or an Edwin Waugh among the soldier-poets, or any example in the noble Scots Doric. He accounts for certain disappointments prepared for the war anthologist by the two malign influences of the popularity of the music-hall song and the literary convention, whereby the rank-and-file of our fighting men, by land and sea, are made to speak a kind of Cockneyese, of which no Cockney is capable. Sir George Younghusband is cited in support of the theory that Mr. Kipling made the modern soldier, which recalls Mr. Frederick Greenwood's discovery that modern womanhood in the Row was the creation of Du Maurier. And, yet, in the popularity at the front of such a ditty as the revived

"The bells of Hell ring ting-a-ling-a-ling  
For you but not for me,"

there is—*faute de mieux*—an expression of elements in our fighting men, which too rarely emerge in this collection to render it entirely adequate. The "communal consciousness" is not exhausted and satisfied without some notes which here are never heard. That absent note of hatred for the enemy is not among those which it will lament. Perhaps for the reason Mr. Osborn suggests, the British people in the main follow the example of the new soldier-poet, in whom it is completely absent, by renouncing rancour towards the enemy as a waste of nervous tissue; or more likely, because in elderly and decent civilians, as in the young fighters who know the truth about war, hatred of other men, even when they are enemies, is less abiding than hatred of brutal ideas. A very understanding lady a hundred years ago found out about herself that she could never raise her voice without losing her temper. It was her Bishop, as she elsewhere reports, who warned his people above all things against virtuous indignation, since pride was generally at the bottom of it. Civilians, in whom that vice lasts long after the fighting man has shed it, raise their voice in verse, but the result of that inspiration is promptly recognised as the literature of temper, not of passion. "Songs of hate" are astonishingly well away from this volume; and the infrequency of martial and battle notes, and the absence of something, too, of grosser fibre, are symptoms of an acquired attitude of mind in the soldier of deeper significance than civilians are yet aware. Yet no one doubts that our singers here have been able in the fight to

"make  
The name of poet terrible in just war,"

as they are adjured to do in Private Ivor Gurney's sonnet; and, indeed, we know that some of them have matched their tenderest verses with others of a terrible actuality. Perhaps, in subsequent editions, Mr. Osborn will tap their more volcanic springs.



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But as it stands, this body of war poetry is really an amazing thing, giving glimpses of just that ultimate significance of warfare which, we fancy, those outside its zone most felt was there to be discovered. There has been no room to name particular poems, some already well known, others unknown hitherto, nor to note individual beauties; and, indeed, it is as a whole that the collection is most of all engrossing. A flowering of the spirit Mr. Osborn rightly calls it, without a parallel.

### VOX POPULI?

"The Peepshow." By HELEN PROTHERO LEWIS. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

"The High Heart." By BASIL KING. (Chapman & Hall. 6s. net.)

"Hester Redeemed." By GUY THORNE. (Jarrold. 6s.)

"Her Wedding Night." By MAX PEMBERTON. (Jenkins. 5s. net.)

A curious fatalism invariably attends the novel which is written down to its readers. It may or may not require a trained eye to pierce the flimsy veils and scarves which conceal so ill the disposition of the writer, but he cannot evade the consequences of his delusion. For a delusion it is. How can the novelist possibly know what the public wants, when the public knows it no more than the novelist? To know what you want is as much a part of the art of living as it is the fruit of experience, reflection, and choice. The compliment, therefore, that these novelists pay to the public they address so confidently is as extravagant as a courtly dedication. If the public knew what it wanted, it would not take anything it can get. If it knew exactly what it wanted, it would, in default of getting it, create it. The fact is that these novelists do not supply the public with what the public wants, but take pains to prevent it getting what it doesn't want—which is a very different thing. They trade not upon a positive need, but upon a negative distaste for taking mental exercise. The rest is supplied by the novelists themselves, who, perhaps, are more obedient to the wants of the publisher than the chimera by whom they beget their shadowy children. Anyway, whatever the process or the agents, we seem somehow or other to get down to the lowest common denominator rather than the highest common factor—to the demagoguery rather than the democracy.

"The Peepshow" is one illustration. We put it to the credit of the author that she is working upon uncongenial material, that the clever and the ingenious of which she shows symptoms might under a kinder horizon have become the smart and the shoddy. As it is, the antics of her tiresome earl and his family leave us impenetrably solemn. So that when the war comes at last, or rather when "the angel in the Bible" decides it is high time "to stir the nation up," and we have learned that "it pays to be good" (£50,000 is the sum), we feel consoled by the fact that, whatever its qualifications for putting an end to militarism, it has a decided effect upon the facetious doings of the earl and his family.

"The High Heart," but for the palpitations (culminating in death) which attack it rather more than half-way through might have been a promising book. The latter portion deals with the war. Now, we do not object to the war cutting into a novel and taking its legs off—that was, perhaps, to be expected. But the propaganda of the hero and heroine, who are of opinion that it is all "part of the great War in Heaven," and that it began "beyond modern Europe, beyond the Middle Ages, beyond Rome and Assyria and Egypt," does not warm us to that cheerful indulgence which is the secret of how to sit down and review these democratic novels. The first part, on the other hand, is a rather more interesting study of the social attitude of wealthy America. It describes the opposition of the Brokenshires (multi-millionaires) to the marriage of one of the sons of the family to a penniless, but well-bred, Canadian girl. But then the opinion of Alexandra Adare, who makes it a point of principle that you ought to marry a man not because you like him, but only if his family likes you, seems to us so inconsequent that the value of the analysis is largely blunted. And we cannot believe that the terrific Mr.

Brokenshire, who is such a Tamerlane of financial, social, and family eminence that he has only to stare at opposition to his slightest will, can have been such a success in the business world as the author would like us to think.

Mr. Thorne's novel is one of those agreeable books which leave the reviewer nothing to do. A little *précis* and *factum est*. It is a study in lycanthropy, and describes how Hester, having been the dwelling-place of demons, becomes a sweet, innocent, and winsome girl, after an operation by a celebrated "alienist" upon the brain. Unfortunately, when she is in the act of marrying the well-educated, handsome, brilliant, and devoted son of the alienist, she falls down, strikes her head—and, hey, presto! the demons take violent possession of their old residence once again. The redemption takes place in this wise. Hester's old, blood-lusting, burgling paramour appears on the scene, very glad (after one of the old hate-kisses) to have his crib-cracking comrade back again. But the bridegroom, walking in his sleep, suddenly opens the door. The genial burglar rushes upon him, cutting the air with the blade of his life-preserver. Hester interposes her body between the assassin and his victim, and takes the blow upon her demon-ridden head. And thus is Hester Redeemed.

The main impression we receive from Mr. Pemberton's stories is of fat Huns being stabbed and lying weltering in their gore. A subsidiary one belongs to a romantic story, which leaves this stirring modern stage. In it we learn to our surprise that Louis XIV. was apparently King of France in the Middle Ages.

### The Week in the City.

THE Christmas holidays came as a welcome relief to the Stock Exchange, which has had very little encouragement and much to depress it since last summer, when hopes of an early and satisfactory peace ran high in some well-informed quarters. When members returned to the House on Thursday morning they found no particular change in the markets. Government stocks are not likely to recover in view of the Labor proposals for conscription of wealth, and Mr. Bonar Law's endorsement of an after-war capital levy. Much interest will be aroused by the electricity power projects, which seem to offer prospects of very large capital issues, though where the capital is to come from does not appear. Some people think that the rate of interest may rise to 10 per cent. after the war.

#### SAMUEL ALLSOPP & SONS.

For many weeks past, Brewery Shares have been rising rapidly in price as a direct result of the excellent profits which have been disclosed in the annual reports published from time to time. Until a few months ago, a large proportion of the reports contained complaints of restrictive legislation and the severe hardship caused thereby to the brewing industry. But these have been lacking in recent months, for, thanks to Government policy in the matter, brewing companies are enjoying totally unexpected prosperity; preference shareholders are receiving arrears of dividends at an entirely unexpected rate, and ordinary shareholders who have not had any distribution on their holdings for years are beginning to receive dividends. A striking example of returning prosperity is afforded by the report for the year ended September 30th last, of Samuel Allsopp and Sons, a company which has had a decidedly chequered career, as far as finance is concerned; indeed, in 1913, a scheme of reorganisation had to be carried out. For the year 1913-14, the net profit amounted to just over £13,000. In the following two years it improved substantially, but for the past financial year it has jumped from £60,791 to £127,165, gross profits amounting to £239,716, as against £161,801. This enables the full interest to be paid on the 4½ per cent. Debenture stocks. In the two previous years only 2½ per cent was paid, the remaining 2 per cent being satisfied by the issue of Certificates of Right. This year £54,000 is set aside for the redemption of these Certificates, £20,000 is placed to reserve as against £10,000 a year ago, £13,489 is reserved for income tax, and £22,930 is carried forward. Certificates of Right to the extent of £119,084 are outstanding, £37,785 having been purchased and cancelled during this year.

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